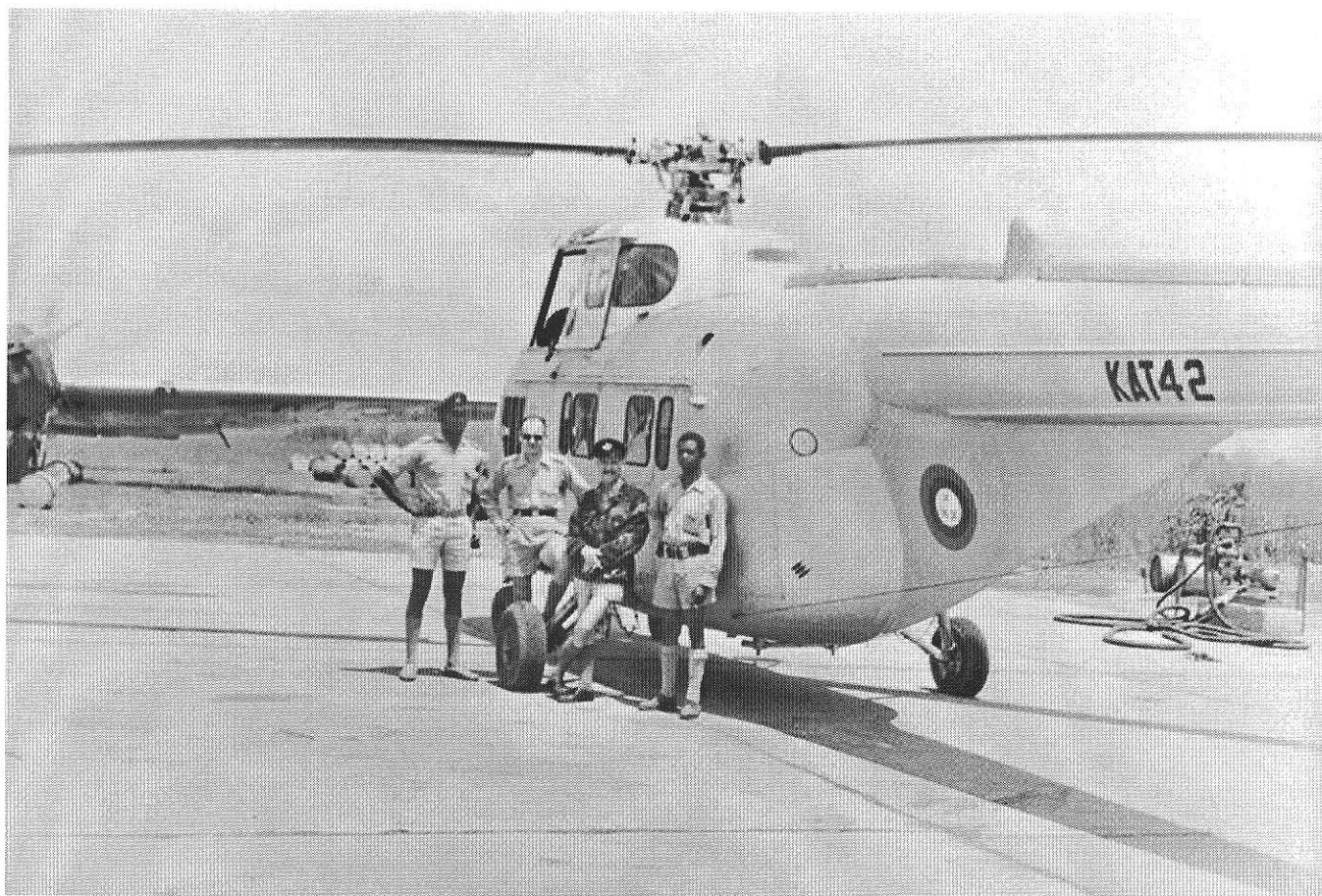


# small air forces observer

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October 2008

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**Chinese Communist Stearman PT-17**  
**Paraguayan Cessna 172 Bomber**  
**Sikorski S-55 in the Congo**  
**Panchito Pistolas (Part I)**

vol. 32 no. 2 (126)

October 2008



Photo 1

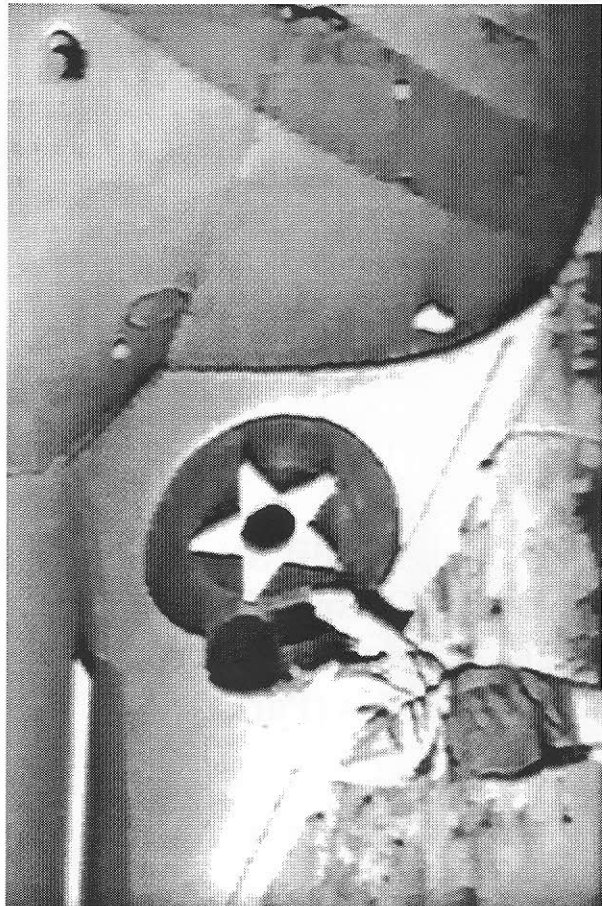


Photo 3



Photo 2



Photo 4



# SMALL AIR FORCES OBSERVER

## The Journal of the Small Air Forces Clearing House

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[allAirForce.html](http://allAirForce.html)> for photos of models by the members.

**COVER PHOTO:** The Katangese S-55C at Elisabethville in 1961, after the square insignia were changed to roundels and the serial amended to KAT42. In the background is C-47 number KAT-04, a former Swissair aircraft which never actually flew in Katangan markings. (Via Dave Becker)

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## **AUSTRALIA**

### **AUSTRALIAN PLASTIC MODELLERS ASSOCIATION**

(APMA, PO Box 51, Strathfield, NSW 2135; 4 issues airmail AS40. International payment is best handled via Paypal at [iansharyn@bigpond.com.au](mailto:iansharyn@bigpond.com.au). Web Site: [www.apma.org](http://www.apma.org).

**2-08** (28 pages) "Qantas Lancastrians" 2 pages with 5 photos. "The First AWACS" one page including drawing of Wellington with 'Air Controlled Interception' radar, "PBK Catalinas in Dutch Service" 4 pages including one photo and a 3-view drawing of 'Y87'. "B-25 Mitchels in USMC Service" 5 pages including 3 color photos of B-25 in Canadian Warplane Museum, and 6 side-view drawings of USMC Mitchels.

## **AUSTRIA**

**ÖFH NACHRICHTEN** (Oesterreichische Flugzug Historiker, Pfenninggeldf 18/2/14, A-1160 Wien. Write for free sample.)

1/08 (40 pages) "Fiat C.R.20 (Tiel 2)" 13 pages including 9 photos [Italy (1), Austria (6), Hungary (1), & Poland (1)], table of Austrian serials, table of technical data, and 6 color profile drawings [Austria (4) & Luftwaffe (2)]. "Grundung der ersten Flugpostlinie (Teil 2)" 6 pages on the beginning of airmail in Austria including 6 photos. "Lt.i.d.R. Thaddeus Prauss" 3 pages including 6 photos and a profile drawing of Polish Breguet 14. Color photo of Austrian Typhoon '7L+WG'.

## **BELGIUM**

**KIT** (IPMS Belgium, c/o Michel Willot, dreve de Champagne 14, B-1190 Bruxelles; French & Flemish. International Postal Money Order for \$30 for 4 issues.

**#150** 2/2008 (92 pages) A special issue celebrating 40 years of IPMS/Belgium. "Maquettes et Collection" 5 pages on building a collection of 1/48-scale models of Finnish aircraft including 11 photos of finished models (D-21, MS-406, Bf 109G, & Buffalo). "Le Fiat CR.42 de l'Aeronautique Militaire" 7 pages on building the 1/72-scale Italeri kit in Belgian colors including 13 photos of the model under construction and completed. "F-16 MLU" 5 pages on

building the 1/32-scale Academy kit in Belgian colors including 10 photos of the model under construction and completed and 5 color photos of the real thing. "Meteors for Biafra" 3 pages including 4 photos and a profile drawing of 'SE-DFC' "Meteor TT Mk.20" 4 pages on building the 1/72-scale PJ Productions kit including 11 photos of the model under construction and finished. "L'Alouette II a la Force Aerienne Belge" 6 pages including 'Mini Walk Around' with 55 photos of details of aircraft. "Westland Sea King Mk.48" 11 pages on building the 1/72-scale Revell kit in Belgian markings including 11 photos of the model under construction, 'Mini Walk Around' with 36 photos of details of aircraft, 5 color photos of the real thing, and a 2-view color profile drawing.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

**REVI:** Dvoumesicnik a letadlech a leticich. REVI Publications, PO Box 143, Svojsikova 1588, 708 00 Ostrava-Poruba, Czech Republic. E-mail: [redakce@revi.cz](mailto:redakce@revi.cz). Web site: [www.revi.cz](http://www.revi.cz). Text in Czech and photo captions in Czech and English.

[Ed: Revi is very difficult to review. It's not that it not a good magazine. On the contrary, it a great magazine with lots of color photos and drawings with lengthy captions in English. However, it does have a non-conventional format; articles that go on for issues, photos and color drawings relating to the kit reviews. It's all difficult to unravel if you don't understand Czech. Therefore, I'm going to list only the color drawings and let them suggest the content.]

**#58** (56 pages)

## **FINLAND**

**MALLARI** (IPMS Finland, PL 798, 00101 Helsinki 10; 6 issues \$20.00, no check accepted due to the high redemption costs). Text in Finnish.

**2/2008 #171** (24 pages) "VL Pyry: Osa 1" 9 pages including 17 photos, numerous sketches from the "maintenance" manual, a color 4 view drawing, a 1/72-scale 3-view drawing, and 3 side-view drawings. [Ed: IPMS Finland sent me an extra copy, so anyone building the AZ Model kit of the Pyry who wants this article, I can provide this

issue for the cost of postage.] Seven pages on color photos and list of winners from Model Expo 2008.

## **SUOMEN**

**ILMAILUHISTORIALLINEN LEHTI** (Pentti Manninen, Jakomaentie 8 b C 300, 00770 Helsinki. Subscription: Europe 26 euro, elsewhere 32 euro, and 45 USD. Payment by International Postal Order or in cash notes; no (cheques not accepted because of high redemption rates). Each issue includes a 2-page English summary.

**2/2008** (24 pages)

## **FRANCE**

**AVIONS:** Toute l'Aeronautique et son Histoire (Lela Presse, 29 rue Paul Bert, 62230 Outreau, France. 50 euro for 6 issues).

**#164** Juillet/Aout 2008 (72 pages) "Gaston Ladarre: Aviateur Colonial" 11 pages on pre-WWII flying in Africa and Southeast Asia including 31 photos (Potez 25 & 29 and Bloch 210) and 2 color profile drawings (Potez 25). "Mes Annees Neptune a la 22F" 8 pages with 30 photos and 2 color profile drawings. "Mauboussin M 200 a M 202" 18 pages including 44 photos, 10 color profile drawings with 3 top view drawings, and a scale 3-view drawing. "Hiroyoshi Nishizawa" 11 pages including 24 photos, victory list, and 4 color profile drawings [Zero (2), F4U-1, & FM-2]. "Elle volait seulemant sur quadrimoteurs" 9 pages including 22 photos (Piaggio P.108, Ju 90, SM.95, & Ar 232).

**#165** Septembre/Octobre 2008 (71 pages) "Focke-Wulf Fw 190 D-9 'Long-Nez'" 24 pages including 33 photos, 18 color profile drawings, two color 4-view drawings (one with red undersides w/ white stripes), and a color cover painting. "Du Voisin au Mirage (partie 1<sup>ere</sup>)" 10 pages on French a/c in Peruvian AF service including 35 photos (Caudron G.3, Salmson 2A2, MS 29, MS 35, Breguet 19, MS 320, MS 301, Potez 39, NiD 132, and Hanroit 438). "Ocean Tiger Meet 2008" 15 pages with 45 photos and 18 color drawings of unit badges. "Mike Donnet: de l'Aeronautique Militaire belge a la RAF" 15 pages including 29 photos and 2 color profile drawings



(Renard R-31). "Info-Maquerres et Livres" 3 pages with reviews of 11 kits (including a pair of 1/72-scale Dornier Do 17K from RS Models: one with short nacelles and decals for Yugoslavia, Italy & Bulgaria and the other with long nacelles and decals for Yugoslavia, Croatia, and RAF) and 3 books.

#### GERMANY

**FLIEGER REVUE EXTRA** (Verlag Fliegerrevue, Herrn Detlef Billig, Oraniendamm 48, D-13469 Berlin. 4 issues per year, \$66 surface. Payment by check drawn on German bank)

**#21 Mai 2008** (116 pages) "MiG-21 im Einsatz Sud- und Sudostasien" 22 pages on Asian MiG-21s: Afghanistan (5 photos); Bangladesh (5 photos); India (15 photos); Indonesia (1 photo); North Korea (4 photos); Cambodia (3 photos); Laos (3 photos); Mongolia (3 photos); Myanmar (1 photo); Pakistan (7 photos); Sri Lanka (4 photos); and Vietnam (7 photos), and 10 color profile drawings [Afghanistan, India (2), Indonesia, North Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, & Vietnam]. "T-6 Texan im Katangkrieg" 18 pages including 30 photos, map, 7 color profile drawings [T-6 (3), J-29 (3), & Canberra]. [Ed: essentially the same article as in SAFO but with color photos and profiles.] "Der Strakste uberleby. Teil 1 - Von AEG bis Zeppelin" 26 pages on aircraft produced in Germany immediately following WWI, including 41 photos of some very unfamiliar aircraft. "Zeitenwende Die russische Luftmacht im Umbruck: Teil 2; Russische Foderation" 28 pages on the current state of Russian military aviation including 41 photos and numerous tables. "Kamikaze vor Okinawa" 17 pages including 31 photos, map, a color 3-view drawing (Alf), and 4 color profile drawings [Jake (2), Zero, & Pete].

#### ITALY

**JP-4 Mensile di Aeronautica** (JP-4, Via XX Settembre 60, 50129 Firenze; English summary of selected articles.

**#6 Giugno 2008** (100 pages) Color photos: Swiss PC-21 & Norway JSF. "Veterani & Musei" 2 pages including 2 photos (Ro 43 & Ca 113). "Spring Flag 2008" 7 pages including 19 photos (Spanish F18, Greek F-16, Turkish F-16, etc.). "Lo Spad di Zanardo" 4 pages on a reproduction Spad 13 including 13 photos. "Incidenti Militari" 2 pages

including 4 photos (South Korea RF-4C & Equatorial Guinea An-32).

**#7 Luglio 2008** (100 pages) Color photo: Azerbaijan Be-200. "Giornata Azzurra 2008" 6 pages with 35 photos (UAE Mirage 2000, Italian Lockheed Martin F-35, Belgian SH-3D, Romanian MiG-21, Polish PZL-130 Orlik, etc.). "Il REOS del l'Esercito" 6 pages including 6 photos of Italian CH-47, AB-412, & AW.129 Mangusta. "Incidenti Militari" 1+ pages including 3 photos (Belgian PL-77 glider & Chinese Mi-17).

**#8 Agosto 2008** (100 pages) Color photo: Austrian F-5E. "36° Stormo" 6 pages including 12 photos of Italian Typhoons. "Tiger Meet 2008" 2 pages with 10 photos. "Pitch Black 2008" 4 pages with 13 photos (RAAF Hornet, Singapore F-5, Malaysia F-18, & Thailand F-16). "Incidenti Militari" 2 pages including 5 photos (Hungary L-39ZO, Brazil Eurocopter HM-1, & Belgium A109).

**#9 Settembre 2008** (100 pages) Color photo: India BAE Hawk. "Gli Eurofighter Spagnoli" 5 pages including 10 photos. "Cancellate la RIAT 2008" one page with 4 photos (Greek RF-4, Czech AN-26, & Pakistan P-3 Orion). "Immagini dal Mozambico" one page with 4 photos [includes Namibia Falcon 900 (see review of Broplan's Falcon 900 elsewhere in this issue)]. "Miss Veedol" 4 pages including 11 photos of reproduction the Bellanca J-300 that flew from Japan to Washington state in 1931. "Incidenti Militari" 1+ pages including 5 photos (Greece RF-4E, South Africa Bo-105, Bulgaria C-27J, & Colombia Convair CV-580).

#### NETHERLANDS

**MODELBOUW IN PLASTIC** (IPMS-Nederland, c/o Luuk Boerman, Kerkstraat 2, 2471 AP Zwammerdam. E-mail: lucasb@normadblend.nl.

**3/2008** (40 pages) "Sea Fury FB.11" 3 pages on building the Trumpeter 1/72-scale kit including 11 photos. "Me 262A-1a of Me 262C-1a" 1+ pages on building the Academy 1/72-scale kit including 5 photos. "Kamov Ka-29 'Marine'" 1+ pages on building the 1/72-scale Revell kit including 2 photos. "Koninklijke Luchtmacht Cougar AS532 U2 Mk. 2" 6 pages on converting the 1/72-scale Italeri kit of the Cougar into a Dutch Mk.2 including 8 photos of the real thing, a color two view drawing, a drawing of the necessary modifications, and 5 photos of

the model. Also an 8-page article on the Revell 1/350-scale *Bismark*.

#### POLAND

**LOTNICTWO** (Krzysztof Zalewski, ul Grochowska 306/310, pok. 206, 03-840 Warszawa. E-mail: kz@magnum-x.pl.)

**5/2008 Maj** (100 pages) "FIDAE 2008" 4 pages including 12 photos (Chile Bell UH-1H, F-16, & F-5E; Brazil CASA C-295; and Argentine IA-63 Pampa). "Raporto Smiglowcach" 4 pages on Polish helicopters including 6 photos. "Boeing F-15E Strike Eagle (cz.1)" 11 pages including a 5-view scale drawing, and 17 photos [Israel (2), Saudi Arabia (2), & South Korea (1)]. "Sily Powietrzne" 7 pages on Albanian AF including air-order-of-battle for 1989 & 2008, and 16 photos [F-7A/MiG-21 (2), FT-2/MiG-15UTI, F-6/MiG-19 (2), H-5/Il-28, FT-5/MiG-17UTI, BT-6/Yak-18, Y-5/An-2, AB-205, AB.206, AS 350 Ecurell, & Z-5/Mi-4 (2)]. "Faircy Barracuda (cz.1)" 10 pages including a 5-view scale drawing (Mk.II), a color profile drawing (Mk.I), and 19 photos. "Samodzielna Eskadra Lotnictwa Rozpoznawczego WOP" 8 pages including 4 color profile drawings (Jak-12, Li-2, SM-1, & An-2W), and 13 photos. "Mustangi nad Chinami (cz.I)" 6 pages including 15 photos and 3 color profile drawings (includes a 2-seat P-51 in Chinese markings).

**Numer Specjalny 5** (100 pages) "Samoloty przeciwpancerne Luftwaffe" 12 pages including 25 photos and 5 color profile drawings [Hs 129B, Ju 88P, Ju 87G, & Fw 190F (2)]. "Samoloty bojowe walki ZSSR" 10 pages on little-known Soviet twin-engine attack planes including 20 photos and four 3-view drawings (Polikarpov WIT-2, Ilyushin Il-6, Sukhoi Su-8 & I-2M), and a scale 5-view drawing (Pegas). "Brytyjske-amerykanska ofersywa bombowa 1944-45" 13 pages including 19 photos and 5 color profile drawings [Halifax, B-17 (2), B-24, & Lancaster]. "Japonskie bombowce strategiczne" 12 pages including 13 photos, 6 color profile drawings, five 3-view drawings (Nakajima Project Z, 19 Shi; & Kawasaki Ki-91; & G10N1), and two scale 4-view drawing (Nakajima G5N2 Shinzan & G8N1 Renzan). "Bell P-63 Kingcobra" 13 pages including 31 photos (including a rare photo of a 2 seater in Soviet markings), a scale 6-view drawing (P-63C), and 3 color profile drawings

(Soviet, French, & Pinball). "Erich Hartmann" 8 pages with 8 photos, 2 color profile drawings (Bf 109), and list of victories. "Reggiane Re.2005 Sagittario" 6 pages including 8 photos, a scale 5-view drawing, and 3 color profile drawings. "Specjalny szybowiec samobojczy" 4 pages on Japanese jet-powered gliders including 3 photos, three 3-view drawings, and 2 color profile drawings. "Mieczyslaw Sawicki" 5 pages including 8 photos and one color profile drawing (Spitfire LF.IX).

6/2008 (100 pages) "Gniazdo Gripenow" 5 pages including 9 photos of Czech Gripen. "Sily Powietrzne Federacji Rosyjskiej (cz.IV) – Lotnictwo taktyczne w Europie" 12 pages on modern Russian Air Force including 21 photos. "Gdynska

Brygada Kotnictwa Marynarki Wojennej" 4 pages on Polish naval aviation including 10 photos (W-3, Mi-17, SH-2G, Mi-14, & An-28) and pull-out poster of PZL W-3RM Anakonda. "Fairey Barracuda (cz.II)" 10 pages including 21 photos and 3 color profile drawings. "Mustangi nad Chinami (cz.II)" 6 pages including 15 photos and 3 color profile drawings (2 USAAF & a P-51C in Japanese markings). "Niezwyczajne losy Antica 'Wiedenczyka'" 2 pages including 2 photos and 2 color profile drawing of Polish Air Force An-2 '7447'.

#### USA

IPMS/USA JOURNAL (IPMS/USA, PO Box 2475, North Canton, OH 44720-

0475 USA. Six issues per year: In USA: \$25 for adults (18 and older) and \$12 for juniors (17 and younger); Canada & Mexico \$30; all other \$32.)

July+August 2008 – Volume 20, Number 04 (74 pages) There is nothing in this issue of small-air-force interest. However, the aircraft modeler will find interesting discussions of modeling techniques in the articles: "Diver Destroyer: Building an IPMS Pioneer's Plane from Academy's 1:72 Tempest", "Samurai Phantom: A Ninja Approach to Hasegawa's Challenging F-4", "Lighted Widebody: Building Revell's 1:144 747-400 and leaving the lights on", and "Wokka Beastie!: Combining Italeri's 1:48 kit with Eduard's brass to build a big Chinook"

## -books-books-books-books-books-books-books-books-books-books-books-



Fieseler Fi-156 Storch, by Nenad Mikusev. YASIG, Novosadskog Sajma 16/301, 21000 Novi Sad, Serbia. E-Mail: supercuber@neobee.net. Website: aeropoxy.netfirms.com. 62 A-4 size pages with color card cover. Entirely in English. (2003)

This neat little booklet provides drawings of camouflage schemes for 99 Fi 156 from 18 countries: Austria (1); Bulgaria (5); Czechoslovakia (10);

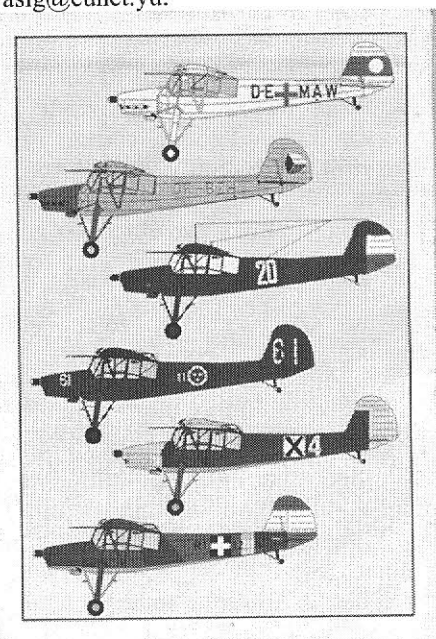
Finland (3); France (3); Hungary (2); Italy (3); Luftwaffe (29); Norway (2); Poland (9); RAF (4); USSR (1); Spain (4); Sweden (7); Switzerland (4); USAAF (2); South Vietnam (1); and Yugoslavia (6).

In addition there are 11 color profile drawings on the covers: Luftwaffe, Norway, France, RAF, USAAF, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Sweden, Bulgaria, and Hungary.

The text begins with a brief description of the development of the Storch, a list of all variants, and a 2-page multi-view scale drawing. This is followed by 44 pages of b&w drawings. These drawings include side-views of all aircraft and top and bottom views of representative examples of each scheme. All colors are identified by their FS595 equivalent. The modeler will have no trouble applying an authentic color scheme to his chosen Storch. In addition, the brief captions place the Storch in the proper geographical and chronological context. The final 9 pages are a reproduction of a 1938 German Parts Catalogue.

This is an excellent book for the modelers interested in adding a few unusually-marked Fi 156 to their

collection. I was particularly smitten by the Norwegian Storch with Medium Blue (FS35177) fuselage and tail feathers with Trainer Yellow (FS33538) wings. If you are interested in this book, contact Nenad at the above address or by e-mail at yasig@eunet.yu.





# Sikorsky S-55s in the Congo

Leif Hellstrom

The first S-55s in the Belgian Congo were three S-55As delivered in 1955. They were owned by the colonial administration but were operated by Sabena, wore civilian registrations, and were painted in Sabena colours. One was lost in 1958 but the two others were formally transferred to military control in 1960.

Before independence in 1960, there were two operators of military helicopters in the Belgian Congo: the Belgian Air Force and the air unit of the colonial army. The air force had two Westland Sycamores, both of which were lost in accidents while still in Belgian service. The colonial forces had three Alouette IIs (the fates of which will be covered in a later article) as well as a number of Sikorsky S-55s, as described below.

From July 1960 until June 1964 the United Nation operated a total of 16 Sikorsky H-19Ds in the Congo. The UN air operations are outside the scope of this article but one of their helicopters did find its way into Katangan hands.

## Aviation Militaire (Avimil)

The first helicopters of the Aviation Militaire de la Force Publique (known as Avimil) were two new S-55Cs (corresponding to H-19D) received in September 1959. These were given the serials S 41 and S 42 and were used for a variety of tasks. They provided support to the colonial ground forces, such as reconnaissance, supply and medevac, but also supported the civilian administration at times. The helicopters, like all Avimil aircraft, were flown by Belgian pilots.

On 1 April 1960, the two surviving Sabena S-55As were incorporated into the Avimil and officially given the serials S 43 and S 44, although these serials were never applied to the helicopters which continued to carry their civilian registrations. One of these helicopters, S 43 alias OO-CWF, crashed on 4 April 1960 already.

Three S-55s were thus still on hand by independence on 30 June 1960. After independence the Avimil initially continued to operate as before, still staffed by Belgians but now under the nominal control of the new Congolese Government. There was

as yet no Congolese Air Force. In the chaos that followed immediately upon independence, the Sikorskys were thus operated for a few weeks until the Belgian crews were ordered to leave the Congo. For all practical purposes, Avimil ceased to exist on 23 August 1960, the date official Belgian support was withdrawn.

The remaining S-55A, S 44 alias OO-CWG, was abandoned in the capital Leopoldville. S-55C number S 41 was flown to the Belgian base at Kitona and abandoned there. The other S-55C, S 42, ended up in Katanga, as described later on.

The two S-55Cs were painted overall silver, with a white cockpit and transmission housing and a black anti-glare panel. Before independence they carried Belgian roundels on their sides, but at least one of them (and probably both) had these overpainted by Congolese roundels in the summer of 1960. The serials on the booms and nose remained unchanged: S 41 and S 42. The former carried Belgian roundels when later seen abandoned at Kitona, but these may have been re-applied when the helicopter arrived at Kitona, which was still a Belgian base at the time.

The S-55As continued to carry the Sabena colour scheme of white, dark blue, mid grey and black, with white civilian registrations, and there is no indication that any Belgian or Congolese roundels or military serials were ever applied while with the Avimil.

## Aviation Katangaise (Avikat)

The Katangese Air Force, known as Avikat, was formed in August 1960, using former Avimil aircraft flown to the secessionist Katanga province by their Belgian crews. The original fleet included two Alouette IIs and a Sikorsky S-55C flown in stages across the country, while the second Avimil S-55C was left at Kitona since it would not fit in the Belgian C-119 used to ferry equipment from there to Katanga.

The S-55C actually arriving in Katanga was the former Avimil S 42, subsequently given the new serial KAT42 by Avikat. There were initially two Belgian pilots, Roger Busschots and Edward Boutet, to fly the helicopters. The S-55 was used to support army units in the field and also to fly VIPs around Katanga. Like the UN, the Avikat found the S-55's

engine to be under-powered for the hot conditions of Africa and it was frequently necessary to red-line the engine and make rolling take-offs. On one memorable occasion, on a flight with President Tshombe, the S-55 almost crashed on take-off since it refused to gain altitude. The pilot later discovered that two extra passengers had snuck on board, creating a serious overload.

In late August 1961, the UN rounded up most of the Avikat pilots for deportation and the S-55 was stuck at the Katangese capital Elisabethville. There it was formally impounded by the UN on 13 September and permanently grounded. The Sikorsky, like most other Avikat aircraft, slowly deteriorated and was robbed of some parts by the UN, for use on their H-19Ds. As mentioned earlier, KAT42 was formally transferred to the Congolese in 1964 but continued to rot away in Elisabethville until eventually scrapped.

As luck would have it, on 17 September 1961 - four days after KAT42 was captured by the UN - the Katangese captured a H-19D from the UN! The Sikorsky, serial 57-1620, had landed at Jadotville to supply the surrounded UN garrison there with ammunition and water but was unable to take off again since the landing ground was under fire and was captured when the garrison surrendered. The helicopter was taken to the Avikat base at Kolwezi and flown sporadically during the next few months. For some reason it was not given an Avikat serial, though.

The final fate of this second Avikat S-55 is something of a mystery. By early December 1961 it had been placed in a quiet corner of Kolwezi airfield and camouflaged, since the only available helicopter pilot, Claude Berteaux, was away on vacation. During the UN air attacks against Kolwezi on 6 December it was slightly damaged and keeled over when one of the landing gear legs collapsed. By all accounts it did not fly at all during 1962, but in early January 1963, when the Katangese secession was about to end, the diary entry of an Avikat pilot mentions that work was under way of getting it fixed up sufficiently to be evacuated to Angola. There has been no report of it actually making it to Angola but on the other hand it was not found by the UN when they captured Kolwezi a few weeks later, so possibly it was actually flown to some unknown destination in January 1963. Strangely enough, the UN does not seem to have

made any attempts to locate its missing helicopter after the conflict ended.

The first Avikat S-55 retained its original finish of silver and white. Square Katangese flags were initially used as national insignia but these were replaced by Katangese roundels after a few weeks. The original serial S 42 was retained for a short period but was then amended by simply removing the original "S" and substituting "KAT", on the booms and nose. This was probably done around the same time the national insignia were changed.

The ex-UN H-19D was overall white when captured. It was quickly re-painted an overall dark colour, most likely dark green. The yellow tail rotor warning band was left in place as was the white tip of the tail boom. The helicopter was marked with giant Katangese flags on the sides, tail boom fillers and on the nose, although the latter was apparently left unfinished.

#### **Force Aérienne Congolaise (FAC)**

The former Avimil S-55A OO-CWG stood unattended at N'Dolo airfield in Leopoldville until restored to flying condition in November 1961 by members of the UN Helicopter Squadron. It was then used for a period to spray DDT over Leopoldville, which had been one of its main uses before independence. During this period it carried the serial WHO1, since it was used in support of a World Health Organization initiative, but remained painted in the original Sabena colour scheme. In January 1962 the S-55A was transferred back to the Congolese Air Force by the UN, together with an ex-Avimil Alouette II also "liberated" by the UN.

The Force Aérienne Congolaise (FAC) was set up by official order in July 1961 (although confusingly it was to be officially set up again in 1964). It was a purely nominal force until early 1962, when a few aircraft and some foreign pilots began to enter service. The FAC at this point used a serial system with two letters and two numerals and the S-55 was given the identity WT01: the only known aircraft with a WT prefix (all others used WL). It has been claimed that the T stood for Transport (and L for Liaison) but that is likely pure speculation.

None of the FAC pilots during the early years are known to have been helicopter qualified. It is therefore likely that the S-55A continued to be operated by UN pilots on an *ad hoc* basis. There is



every indication that the helicopters saw very little use and only made local flights in the Leopoldville area. By 1963 the S-55 was tucked away in a hangar at N'Dolo airfield with its main rotor removed and it is likely that it never flew again. It is conceivable that it was re-serialled in the new 9T-Pxx range adopted in 1963, but if so this was just a paper exercise. The helicopter remained officially on strength until 1966 when it ceased to be listed and it was presumably scrapped soon afterwards.

The FAC did have access to three further S-55s which were never actually put into service. The first was the former Avimil S-55C number S 41 at Kitona mentioned above which was not recovered. This helicopter never flew again and its hulk remained at Kitona for some years. The second was the former Katangese S-55C KAT42 (see above), which the UN officially transferred to the Congolese Government in February 1964. It remained derelict in Elisabethville and was not recovered either. The third was a former UN H-19D, serial 57-5939, bought by Ghana from the UN forces in the Congo in 1964 but stripped and left behind in Leopoldville. The remains sat in the FAC dump at N'Djili airport into the 1970s.

When received by the FAC in early 1962, the S-55A was still painted in the Sabena scheme of white, dark blue and mid grey, with a black bottom. This was straight away modified by repainting the sides of the helicopter a single colour, most likely a mid grey, while leaving the white top and black bottom. Blue and yellow Congolese roundels were added at the rear and Congolese flags painted on the nose. The serial WT01 was applied in yellow.

### Modelling Notes

For the unwary, modelling an S-55 can be a bit of a minefield. In 1/72 scale, Italeri is currently the best source for kits, of different versions.

Some general comments first. The Italeri kits have strange bumps on the top of the tail boom, which must be removed. The nose undercarriage legs are extremely fragile and consideration should be given to replacing them with white metal legs, available from Whirlybird as set WBA72012 costing £1. The kits also miss the pitot on the starboard corner of the cockpit roof. This is included in Whirlybird sets WBA72011 and WBA72051 (£2.50 each),

which also provide a revised winch, DF loop and flange for behind the engine grills beneath the cockpit windscreen.

The Avikat (ex Avimil) aircraft (S 42/KAT42) is an S-55C and has a cranked tail boom and different tailplanes (horizontal, rather than in an upside-down "V"). This can be built using the Italeri H-19B Chickasaw kit (number 1206). The Avikat version has extra windows on the port side, as well as one extra window on the starboard side and additional windows in the door. These are available in Whirlybird set WBA72035 at £4. The doors on the nose which cover the engine extend lower than the ones on the H-19B. Fortunately, Italeri give you the necessary part (54) even though they don't use it. The other point to notice is the underside of the cabin. The Italeri kit has a funny-looking "bump" on the underside. This was only fitted to a small number of aircraft supplied to the USAF and all other S-55s and licence-built derivatives had a flat plate there. Whirlybird do that plate as a resin casting (WBA72005 at £1.20). There is also a step under the cabin door on the starboard side, worth adding from brass rod. Above the cabin door, there is a winch which is rather different from the Italeri offering in the kit. Again, Whirlybird provide an example in their range (WBA72011 or WBA72051).

The FAC aircraft, by contrast, is an S-55A with a straight tail boom and upside-down "V" tailplanes. Italeri produce this as the UH-19A Rescue Chickasaw, with floats (number 1215), or more recently as the Sikorsky HO4S-3 Horse (number 1267). It was also in the Revell range a couple of years ago as the H-19A Chickasaw (number 04460). This helicopter also has the flat plate under the cabin instead of the Italeri "bump" and the grills under the engine cover doors on the nose, but there are no extra windows. It does, however, have what looks like an air conditioning unit on the starboard fuselage side just forward of the cabin door, and a DF loop on the cockpit roof, available in Whirlybird set WBA72051. There's also a step rail under the cabin door that needs adding.

Decals for the two helicopters in the drawing (Avikat KAT42 and FAC WT01) are both available on Whirlybird Decals sheet number WB72031, which costs £4 plus postage. Whirlybird items can be purchased by e-mail from [rgrevans@compuserve.com](mailto:rgrevans@compuserve.com).

Leif Hellstrom (SAFCH #786), Norrskensbacken 13, S-146 46 Tullinge, Sweden.

## Sikorsky S-55s in the Congo

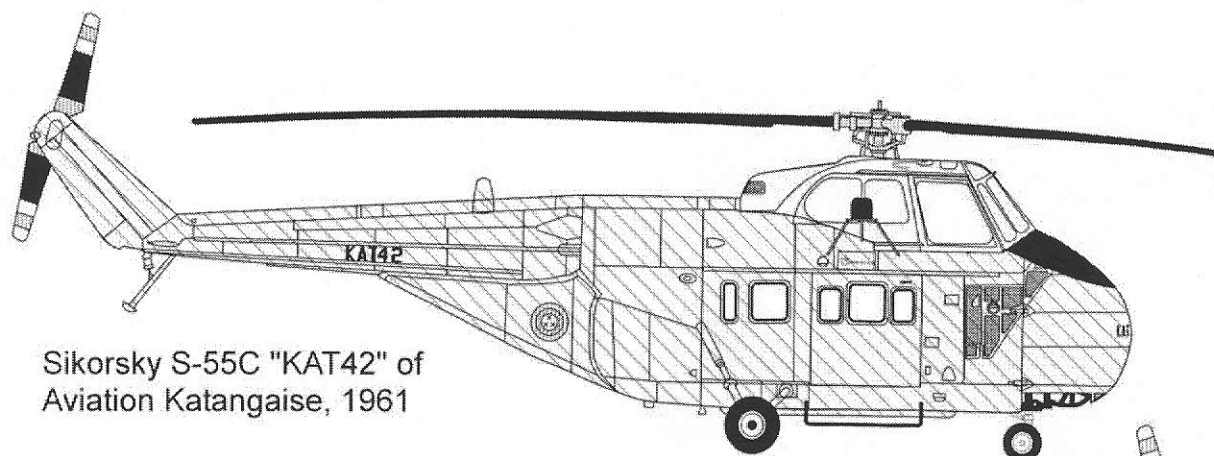
Serial/Reg	Type	C/n	Previous IDs/users	Served from - to	Remarks
<b>Avimil</b>					
S 41	S-55C	55-1272		Sep 59-23 Aug 60	Abandoned at Kitona. Not flown again. Still extant 1963. Eventually scrapped.
S 42	S-55C	55-1276		Sep 59-3 Aug 60	To Avikat as S 42/KAT42.
S 43	S-55A	55-839	OO-CWF	1 Apr 60-4 Apr 60	Avimil serial never painted on. Crashed at Inga, not repaired.
S 44	S-55A	55-840	OO-CWG	1 Apr 60-23 Aug 60	Avimil serial never painted on. Wfu in Leopoldville Aug 60 to Nov 61. To UN as WHO1.
<b>Avikat</b>					
S 42/KAT42	S-55C	55-1276	S 42 (Avimil)	23 Aug 60-13 Sep 61	Interned by UN in Elisabethville. Not flown again. Still extant 1967, eventually scrapped.
(no serial)	H-19D	55-1180	57-1620 (US Army & UN)	17 Sep 61-Jan 63	Damaged in UN air attack 6 Dec 61. Probably not flown again. Final fate unknown.
<b>FAC</b>					
WT01	S-55A	55-840	OO-CWG, S 44 (Avimil), WHO1 (UN)	Jan 62-66	Probably not flown after 1962. Eventually Scrapped

## Congolese S-55s –Captions for Photos on Pages 38 & 71-72

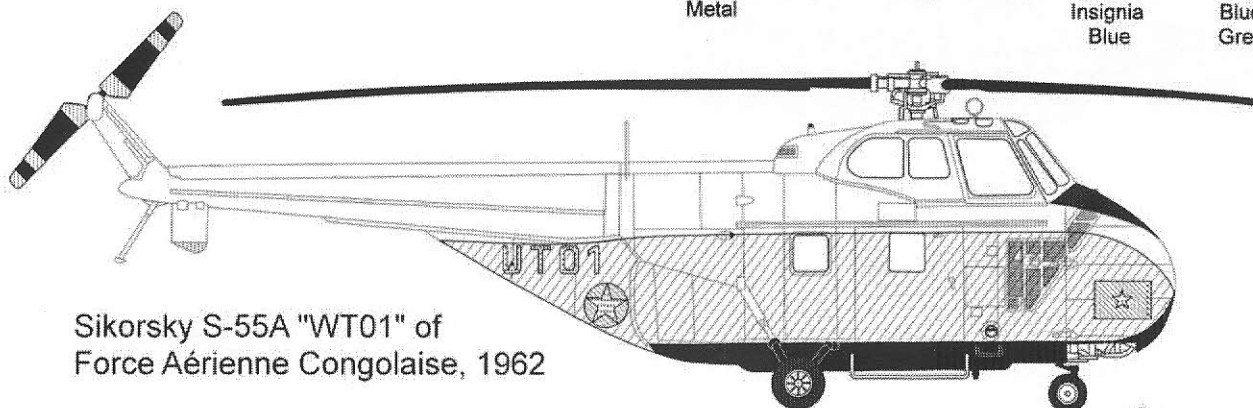
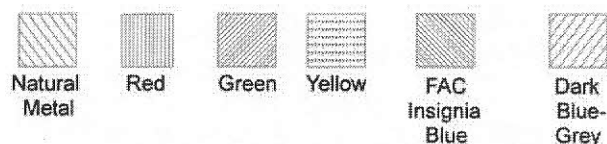
- 1) Sikorsky S-55C number S 41 was one of two new S-55s delivered to Aviation Militaire, the colonial aviation forces in the Belgian Congo in the autumn of 1959. They were painted silver and white and originally carried Belgian roundels. Note the winch as well as the serial repeated on the nose. (Daniel Brackx collection)
- 2) These two ex Sabena S-55As were officially serialised S 44 and S 43 respectively with Avimil, but in fact retained their civilian registrations and paint schemes. The photo is taken at Inga in the Congo in April 1960, while stripping the hulk of the crashed S 43. Note the tanks (probably for DDT) filling the entire cabins. (Via Jean-Pierre Sonck)
- 3) This still from an 8 mm film is the only picture proof that at least one of the Avimil S-55Cs had its Belgian roundels overpainted with Congolese ones after independence. These original, 1960 style roundel had a proportionally smaller star than later Congolese roundels. (Jean-Jacques Mans)
- 4) Poor but unique pictorial evidence (also from an 8 mm film) that the first Katangese S-55 initially carried the short-lived, square, flag style national insignia, and for a time retained the serial S 42. The white portion of the national insignia faced the rear on both sides. (Jean-Jacques Mans)
- 5) Sikorsky KAT42 caught in flight over one of the main streets in Elisabethville, piloted by Lt. Roger Busschots during a military parade in November 1960. The low revs of the rotor are evident! Note the serial on the nose, changed from the original S 42. (Via Jean-Pierre Sonck)
- 6) Another view of KAT42, with some rather ragged Katangese militiamen posing in the foreground. The Sikorsky S-55 logo over the door is partly visible. (Via Dave Becker)
- 7) Representative of the H-19Ds used by the UN in the Congo, 57-6120 was the helicopter later captured by Katanga. It is seen here at Kamina earlier in 1961, about to be set down on a bed of sandbags after an accident where one of the landing gear leg mountings was ripped out: note the tear in the fuselage behind the windows. (Stig Birgersson)
- 8) The ex UN Sikorsky H-19D after capture by Katanga. It was repainted, most likely overall green, with large Katangan flags. There was no serial number. Its service life with the Avikat was short. (Via Leon Libert)
- 9) The other side of the ex UN H-19D, during refuelling. As can be seen, the camouflage finish was somewhat patchy. (Via Dave Becker)
- 10) A frontal view of the Katangan H-19D, after it had been damaged in a UN air attack in December 1961. Ironically, the collapsed leg is the same one that was damaged in UN service, but this time the front strut gave way. The flag on the nose gives an unfinished impression. (Via Leon Libert)
- 11) An unfortunately very dark photo of the Congolese Air Force S-55A at N'Dolo airfield in Leopoldville, probably soon after being received in early 1962. The national insignia can just be made out, together with the serial WT01. In the background is one of the three C-47s procured by the Congo in 1962. (Allan Rosenberg)
- 12) This partial view of WT01 shows the modified Sabena colour scheme to good effect, as well as the flag painted on the nose. The man in the foreground is one of the British C-47 pilots hired by the Congo, while in the background is the sole Alouette II of the FAC: the subject of a later article. (Michael Buncombe)



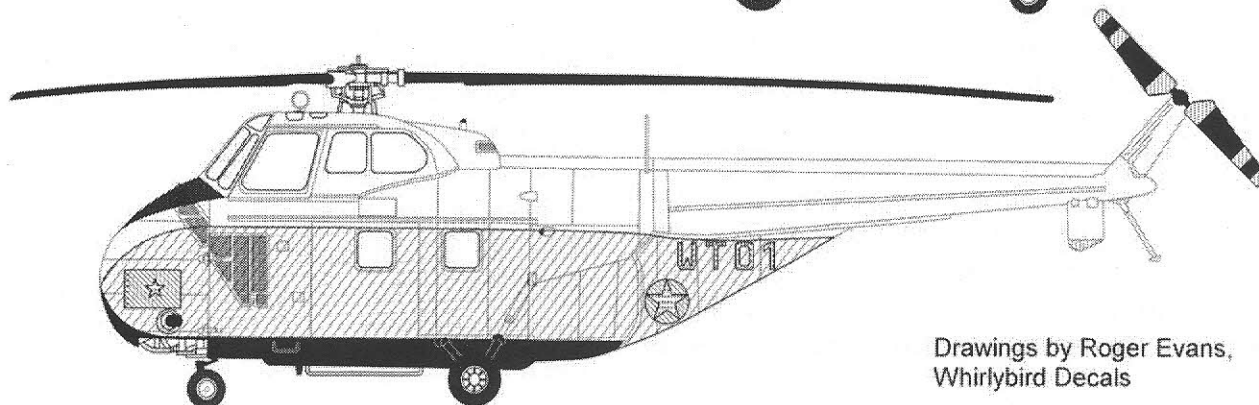
# Sikorsky S-55s in the Congo



Sikorsky S-55C "KAT42" of  
Aviation Katangaise, 1961



Sikorsky S-55A "WT01" of  
Force Aérienne Congolaise, 1962



Drawings by Roger Evans,  
Whirlybird Decals

# PANCHITO PISTOLAS

## A MEXICAN FIGHTER PILOT IN THE PACIFIC WAR

Part I  
Santiago A. Flores



*A portrait of a young Reynaldo Perez Gallardo while learning to fly at Mexico City in the 1940's.  
(Reynaldo Perez Gallardo)*

This is the story of one of Mexico's most colorful fighter pilot who almost did not make it to fight in his country participation in the Pacific War.

Reynaldo Perez Gallardo was born in San Luis Potosi of the state of the same name, on 10 August 1923. His parents were Reynaldo Perez Gallardo, a General in the Mexican Army and his mother was Francisca G. Perez de Gallardo. He would have two brothers and a sister. Due to internal problems Mexico had in the 1920's, the family lived for a time in San Antonio, Texas, where he learned to speak and write English. His family returned to Mexico after the

major revolts were defeated by Federal forces. It was during his youth that Reynaldo found that he had a great interest in aviation and, with the help of his father, he would obtain many books and magazines related to aviation. By this means, he became very knowledgeable about aviation. At an early age, he was able to identify aircraft by sight and the sound of their engine

Reynaldo attended high school at San Luis Potosi where his father was the military governor of the state after the failed 1938 Cedillista Rebellion. A flight (Escuadrilla) of Mexican Air Force aircraft was stationed at the airfield outside of the city. (Vought V-99M, Corsair and Consolidated Model 21-M general-purpose biplanes). The purpose of this Escuadrilla was to support local army units in the suppression of local bandits and any surviving rebels. It was here that Reynaldo got his chance to see and closely inspect aircraft; instead of going home after school, he would go to the airfield and watch the flight of these aircraft for hours. One day, he suggested to the commander of the Escuadrilla that he would clean the underside of the aircraft for free. Since it was a dirt and grass strip, the offer was accepted. Reynaldo got his chance to touch the aircraft and examined them more closely. Because of his good work and patience, he was rewarded with a short flight around the airfield. During the flight, Reynaldo would put his hands and feet lightly on the controls sense the movements made by the pilot.

At the end of the day, the mechanics at the airfield would start the engines, taxi the aircraft close to the hangar, shut down the engine, and man-handle the aircraft into the hangar. Once Reynaldo won the confidence of the ground crew, they taught him how to do these things. However, he dreamed of flying and one day while taxiing an aircraft to the hangar he decided to take it to the runway and take off. After leveling off, he did some movements to get the feel of the aircraft and, being close to the city, decided to fly over the central park. Being young and daring, he decided to fly between the towers of the cathedral, not once by twice. He didn't know his father watched the flight from the government building and had ordered



the pilot be brought to him after he landed. Reynaldo continued flying before deciding to fly back to the airfield. He landed long, stopping the aircraft at the end of the runway. He shut down the engine, put some rocks behind the wheels as brakes, and took off running towards the city. When he arrived home that night, his father was waiting for him. He sat his son in front of him and told him what he done not only had damaged his reputation, but that of his family as well.

After his chat with his father, Reynaldo went to his room, pack some clothes in a suitcase, asked for his mother blessing, and left the house. He went to the train station where he found the train heading to Ciudad Cardenas, the camp of the 35th Cavalry Regiment. He asked the commander of the train's escort if he could ride with them to Ciudad Cardenas. He arrived the next day and went straight to the military camp to enlist.

He started his military career as a cavalry soldier in the Mexican army, on 8 March 1939 with the intent to serve one year in the ranks and then apply for entrance to the Heroico Colegio Militar (Mexico's West Point) hoping to become a cavalry officer. Assigned to the 2nd Squadron of the 35th Cavalry Regiment, Perez didn't have any problems since he was well accustomed to the military life and was a good shot with many types of weapons.

He was soon involved in patrols searching for bandits and rebels who still operated in San Luis Potosi. It was during one of these patrols that Reynaldo Perez Gallardo became a real soldier. A rebel band had split into two groups. One group of three rebels hid in a farm house and engaged Perez's section in a fire fight. Two of his friends were wounded by rebels fire. It was at this moment that Perez ordered the section to open fire on the ranch house to cover him. He jumped a fence, ran to the farm house, knocked down the door, and shot and killed all three rebels, ending the siege. When the 2nd Squadron returned to Ciudad Cardenas, Perez was honored for his feat. He applied to the military academy early in April 1938 and was accepted as a cadet on 1 July 1938. But, he would remain attached to the 35th Cavalry Regiment.

Because of an illness, he was forced to leave the service and the school on 21 October 1939. After recovering his health, he returned to the service on 6

October 1940. During his time off, Perez learned to fly at the city airport soloing on 18 September 1940 and receiving Private Pilot's License no.346 on 2 October 1940 with 12 hours and 42 minutes of flight time. Perez was reinstated as a 2nd Lt. Auxiliary of Cavalry, but on 16 March 1941, after passing his examinations, he was awarded the rank of 2nd Lt. Cavalry and was assigned to the 8th Cavalry Regiment (Oct.-Dec.1941) and later served in the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, (Jan.-Sept. 1942) based near or around Mexico City.

While serving in the cavalry, he submitted his application for the aviation school. This was approved and he was assigned to the Department of Aeronautics on 1 October 1942. He was sent to Zapopan, Jalisco, where the school had been established after its move from Monterrey, Nuevo Leon. As he recalls, he wasn't at the school for long, when he was assigned to lead a group of cadets for training in the United States. The group was sent on orders, dated 19 February 1943, to Corsicana, Texas. The group consisted of the following cadets: Sargento 2/o.de Alumnos: Fausto Vega Santander, Jaime Zenizo Rojas, Raul Garcia Mercado, and Jesus Lopez Monterey.

Due to the wartime situation, this group of cadets were the first generation of civilians who were allowed to join the military aviation school without going first to the military academy that would added four more years to their training. From June 1943 to March 1944 the group trained in the following bases with the dates of completions:

Corsicana AAFB	Primary Training	3 August 1943
Waco AAFB	Basic Training	30 October 1943
Eagles Pass AAFB	Advanced Training	7 January 1944
Hondo AAFB	Transition Training	30 March 1944

During their training, the Mexican personnel flew the following aircraft: Fairchild PT-19, Vultee BT-13/15, North American AT-6, and the Beech AT-7 navigation trainers.

On 20 August 1943, cadet Jesus Lopez Montero was killed in a training accident at Corsicana while flying near the airfield, in PT-19A 42-33829 about 3

miles, east of the airfield. Reynaldo believes that he was killed when he bailed out and struck the tail of the aircraft. However, investigators concluded that Montero was ejected from the aircraft while doing high-speed turns and had not properly fastened his parachute pack.

The surviving members of the group would receive their wings at Eagle Pass AAFB on 1 January 1944. Present at the ceremony was General P.A. Gustavo Salinas Camina, chief of the Mexican Air Force, and Reynaldo's father, General Reynaldo Perez Gallardo. The cadets received their wings in a ceremony in which a group of USAAC cadets and Brazilian Air Force cadets also received their wings. When the group returned to Mexico after finishing their training, they were all assigned as flight instructors at the military aviation school where trained a new generation of pilots in the AT-6 and PT-19 from 16 March to 30 June 1944.

Two years after Mexico declared war on the Axis Powers, General de Division, Manuel Avila Camacho, President of Mexico, decided it was time for Mexico to be represented in the field of battle. After a numbers of meetings with US representatives going up to President Roosevelt and the US Joint Chief's of Staff, it was decided to field an aviation squadron trained to USAAF standards and organization. An aviation unit was preferable over an infantry unit since it could inflict more damage on the enemy with a small number of casualties in return.

So when the call went out for volunteers to man this unit, Reynaldo stepped forward and was selected to form part of the Grupo de Perfeccionamiento Aeronautico (GPA) Escuadron Aereo 201. On 1 July 1944, a 300-man squadron under the command of Col. P.A. Antonio Cardenas Rodriguez and his second in command, Capt. 2/o.P.A. Radames Gaxiola Andrade, was sent to Randolph Field, Texas, for training as a P-47 fighter squadron. Reynaldo's pilot record, which was compiled on 30 July, listed his flying hours to date under the different categories:

Total Flying Hours to Date	400
Night Flying	20
Actual Instruments	10
Hooded Instruments	20
Formation Flying	20
Acrobatic Flying	40

After about 100 flying hours in AT-6 Texan, on 31 July 1944, he was given his check ride by 1st Lt. Billy J. Harper, who gave Reynaldo, some excellent and average grades and the OK for the P-40 transition course with the following remarks: "Officer Average. With additional work will make a very satisfactory Pilot in tactical airplane."

It was during his training in the United States that Perez got the chance to fly a fighter aircraft when his unit was sent to Foster Field, Victoria, Texas, for the transitional training on the Curtiss P-40 Warhawk. During this training, the pilots was divided in three flights under the command of USAAF instructors, Perez Gallardo was assigned to Flight "B". His instructor was 1st Lt. Steacy D. Rogers. Reynaldo's impressions of the P-40 were summed up as a "Ground Looping Son of a Bitch", but luckily there was only one minor mishap in the Curtiss P-40 - a ground looping with minor damage and no injury to the pilot.

After the group of pilots had complete transition training, the unit was sent to Pocatello AAFB, Idaho, where they received Republic P-47D-28-RA. GPA/201 moved from Pocatello AAFB, Idaho, to the warmer climate of the state of Texas to complete their training in the P-47D Thunderbolts at Majors Field, Greenville, Texas.

It was here that the men of the 201st would face the discrimination practices that were prevalent in the area. There were some incidents of Mexican personnel being refused service in restaurants that got Reynaldo and some of his fellow officers involved. "One night some of the squadron's enlisted were refused service at a local restaurant, where there was a sign that read NO MEXICANS ALLOWED. The men returned to camp and told a group of officers, including Gallardo, about the incident. The officers visited the restaurant and confronted the owner. He took the sign down and apologized to us". Other incidents were dealt with by the base commander putting some of these places "Off Limits" to all American and Mexican personnel until they removed their discrimination policies.

Perez made great friends with some of the American instructor pilots in Section "I", among them was Lt. Bob Knapp, a veteran fighter pilot from the 83rd Fighter Squadron, 78th Fighter Group, who flew 119 missions over Europe and was officially credited

with one aerial victory over an Fw-190 fighter on 24 January 1944. (Perez remembers that Knapp had five kills to his credit, but these could have been a combination of ground and aerial kills credited to pilots under 8th Air Force rules.) He was well-known for having brought a P-47 out of a dive over Emden, Germany, at estimated speed of 840 miles per hour. Their friendship was good, since Reynaldo respected Lt. Knapp for his flying abilities and Knapp recognized Perez's flying abilities in turn. In addition, Knapp did not judge a pilot by his race or nationality, but for his flying skills. Reynaldo was the only Mexican pilot to be allowed to buzz the field with Bob Knapp in the lead.

On the down side, Reynaldo did not get along with Capt. Paul E. Miller, the Commanding Officer of Section "I" in charge of the training of the Mexican personnel, Perez mentions that Miller did not get along with the majority of the Mexican pilots and ground personnel including Col. Cardenas Rodriguez, chief of the GPA/Esc.201. One day, Reynaldo was scheduled to fly a mock combat mission with Capt. Miller. (Miller had not served overseas in a combat capacity, only as assistant to the military attaché in Mexico City.) They went up and started to engage. At one point, Miller lost sight of Perez and yelled, "Where the hell are you!!" Reynaldo responded "Here I am!" He was under Miller's aircraft. When he came up on Miller's side, Reynaldo pointed at him like shooting at him. Perez realized years later that was the wrong thing to do! Miller would never speak to Perez again.

Perez would be a witness to the death of one of his fellow pilots, Tte. P. A. Javier Martinez Valle, who was killed during aerial gunnery training over Padre Island, Texas, on 10 March 1945, when his P-47D-28-RA (R-17 42-29463) collided with a tow target while making a 90 degree side approach. The plane made a snap roll to the left and then started to climb up and over the tow cable. The plane then rolled over on its back and dove into the ground. Gallardo was part of a six plane formation led by Lt. Harold V. Johnson, the gunnery operations officer. Perez was flying 42-29442, R-11, when Martinez hit the tow target. Lt. Johnson reported the following: "...as it began to climb over the two ships, I started to call to him on the radio and to direct him not to do acrobatics on the gunnery range. At this moment R11 (Gallardo) called and said 'R17 hit the target'. R17 pulled or soared over the tow ship in a climbing turn

to the left and then the nose dipped to about a 30 degree dive. I called R17 from R8, 'Are you in trouble'. And then repeated. There was no answer. The ship leveled out at about 2,000 ft. and began to climb or zoom. I called 'R17 if you are in trouble bail out- R17 bail out'. There was no response. The ship climbed to 2500 ft. and rolled over to the left on its back. I called again to bail out. The R17 began to dive to the deck and went straight in at about an angle of 80 degrees. The ship hit the sand about 5 miles NNE of Green Island. The tide was going out and the area was draining. R17 burst into flames as soon as it hit. At no time did he transmit after hitting the target, and did not see any object leave the ship. The accident occurred at approximately 1735 CWT. I called R11 who had been firing with R17, and directed him to circle the crash. I directed R9 and his wingman R10 to return to the Base. R14 was with me. I called the tow ship 389 to return to the field." After the rest of the formation flew back to base, a rescue boat and sleds were called in and an AT-6 arrived to circle the burning area where Martinez Valle aircraft went in. This was the second member of the FAEM to lose his life in training.

There was to be one incident that which almost brought Reynaldo's all of going overseas to an end. During his free time he would go to Dallas for some R&R. It was during one of these trips that he met a Miss Audry Denton and they had a good weekend together dancing and having a good time. He returned the next weekend to spend some more time with her, but on Saturday night instead of taking her home they both drove back to Greenville. The next day, Perez managed to find a justice of the peace and they were married (January 1945). That same night, Perez had night-flying training, so he went back to Majors Field. After completing his required training, instead of flying back to the field he decided to fly over to Greenville and fly, over the hotel where his young bride was staying. Being impulsive and somewhat of a risk taker, he decided to impress his young wife by buzzing the town of Greenville, flying at low level over the main street, and doing some rolls as he went by. He recalls: "What other thing I could do? I had nothing to offer her but a small air show. I went and I flew over main street Greenville and I was making a lot of noise with the aircraft. People came out of the buildings, the movie theater, fire station, the police



office. They didn't know what I was doing, they were alarmed." He did not realize that Capt. Paul E. Miller and his wife were at the movie theater enjoying a movie together that was interrupted by the loud sound of the buzzing Vultee BT-13. Miller suspected that it was one of the Mexican pilots under his command and headed back to Majors Field, mad as hell to find the culprit. When Reynaldo landed back at Majors field and taxied to parking area, the military police were waiting for him. As soon as he shut down the engine and got out of the aircraft he was placed under arrest.

Here comes one of the myths that have emerged around what happened to Reynaldo Perez Gallardo: Capt. Miller requested that Col. Cardenas, the commanding officer, to have Reynaldo thrown out of the squadron and returned to Mexico. Col. Cardenas refused to send Reynaldo home, because of the friendship he had with Perez's father. This appears to have caused the final break in the tense relations between Capt. Miller and Col. Cardenas. Miller request to his chain of command that Col. Cardenas be removed as the commander of the GPA/Squadron 201. In the end, it was Capt. Miller who ended up being removed as commander of Section "I" and his place taken by Lt. Col. Arthur W. Kellwood who would served with the GPA/Squadron 201 until the unit's returned to Mexico in November 1945. (Capt. Miller would be sent to China to fly combat support missions. He would stay in the post-war air force, reaching the rank of Lt. Col., only to be killed in action during the Korean War in 1951).

Perez told me during the interview that he was brought before a board of American Officers (18 January 1945) to answer to the chargers of buzzing the town. He believes that they were using him as an excuse to show that the Mexican pilots were not disciplined enough to be trained to USAAF standards. "They got me together with some generals and they accused me of putting in danger the lives of the people of the city. I was sorry and ashamed." He argued he was just following his instincts as a fighter pilot - the same ones the American instructors were trying to instill on the Mexican pilot: "My dream was to accomplish my duty as a fighter pilot, If you are preparing me to fight, it is logical that I have this aggressive enthusiast. I'm a fighter. You can tolerate me a bit before you send me to fight the enemy, because there I will consume my energies."

In the end, the issue went up the Mexican chain of command who recommend that Perez be sent suspended from flying from 17 January for a six month period during which he be assigned the duty of Engineering Maintenance Officer of the squadron under Capt. Ing. P.A. Jesus Carranza. Mr. Gallardo remembers this experience. "This was helpful to me because I was able to learn a lot, I was in charge of the ground services. I felt very sad, but I knew I would one day fly again and I did."

A review of his personnel files shows that he was assigned to the replacement group of pilots within squadron 201. He was still allowed to fly to complete his training including gunnery. (This explains why he was flying during the accidental death of Martinez Valle on 10 March 1945.)

The unit received its battle flags at Majors Field, Texas, in February 1945. By this time, the GPA/Esc.201 was now the Mexican Expeditionary Air Force and Squadron 201 was ready for assignment overseas. Col. Cardenas was promoted to command the MEAF, while Capt. 1/o.P.A. Radames Gaxiola Andrade was name commander of the squadron.



*The group of Mexican cadets receiving instruction from one of thier instructors at Corsicana, Texas. From left to right: Fausto Vega Santander, Reynaldo Perez Gallardo, Jesus Lopez Montero, Raul Garcia Mercado, Jaime Zenizo Rojas. (Reynaldo Perez Gallardo)*

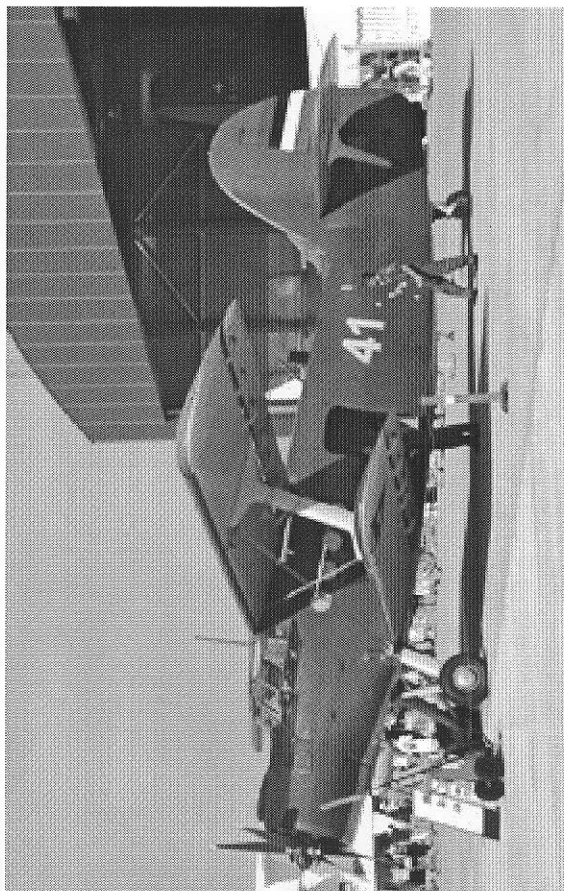
To be continued.

Santiago A. Flores (SAFCH #588), 2047A Cerrissa Ct., San Diego, CA. 92154-1275, U.S.A. E-mail: floresbgkiddo@cox.net

# PHOTO GALLERY

Baltic Republic Aircraft  
at Aalborg, Denmark 2007

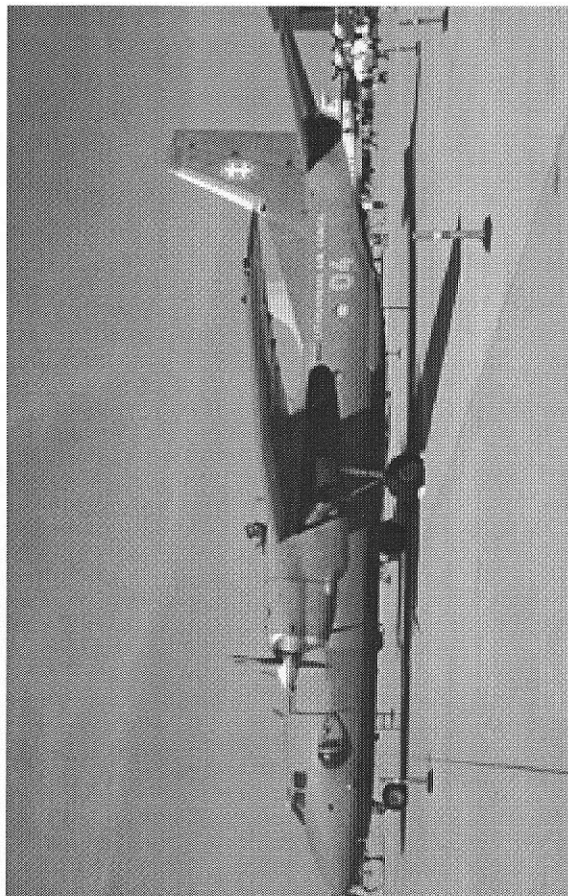
Knut Erik Hagen (SAFCH #904)



Estonian An-2



Latvia An-26



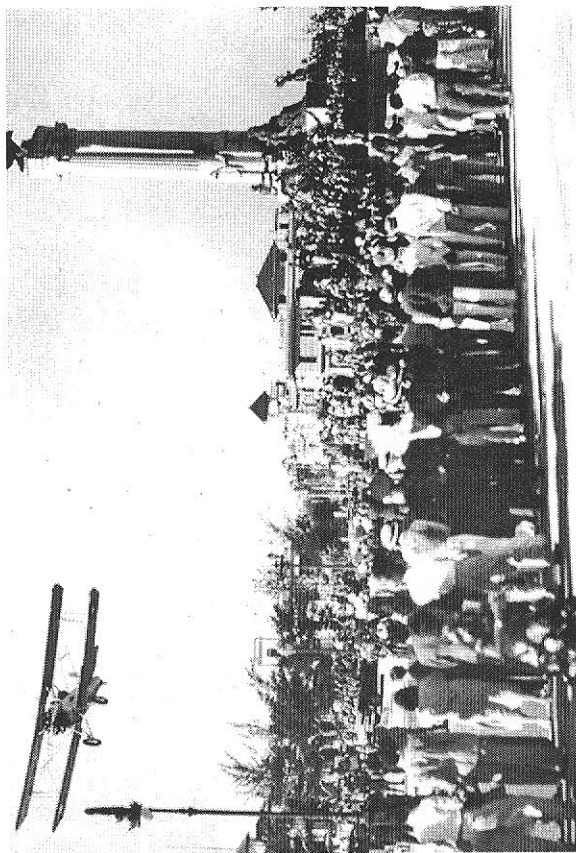
Lithuania An-2



# PHOTO GALLERY

## Cuban Aircraft

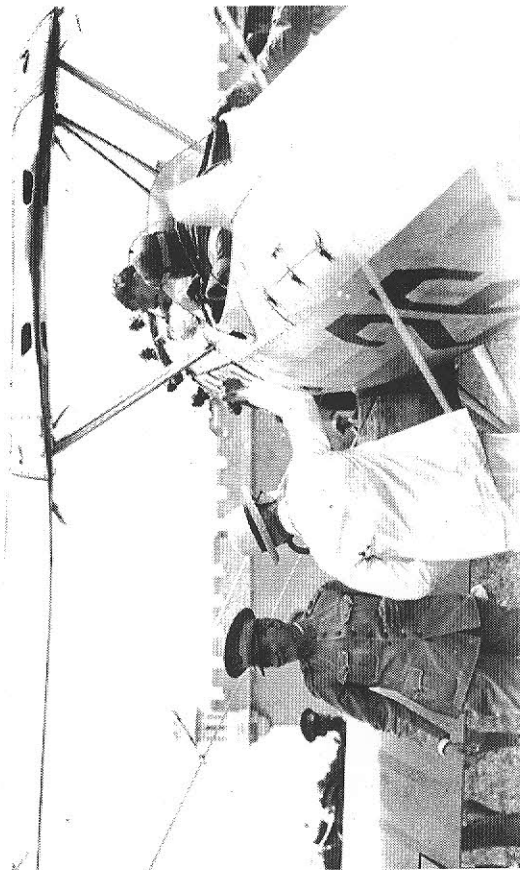
From the Collection of J.L. Gutierrez (SAFCH #1207)



Cuerpo de Aviacion Ejercito de Cuba Consolidated PT-3 Husky. The monument to the right is to the Maine. It is still standing - minus the eagle. (February. 1938)



Campamento de Columbia Airfield: Line up of Cuban Air Force planes. First Cuban officer is wearing gloves! An American officer is in the crowd. President Machado is in the middle with dark suit and light-color hat. (ca 1925-1933)



Cuerpo de Aviacion Ejercito de Cuba Vought O2U-3 Kingfisher #26, Campamento de Columbia Airfield. Man in white is President Machado. (ca 1930-1933)

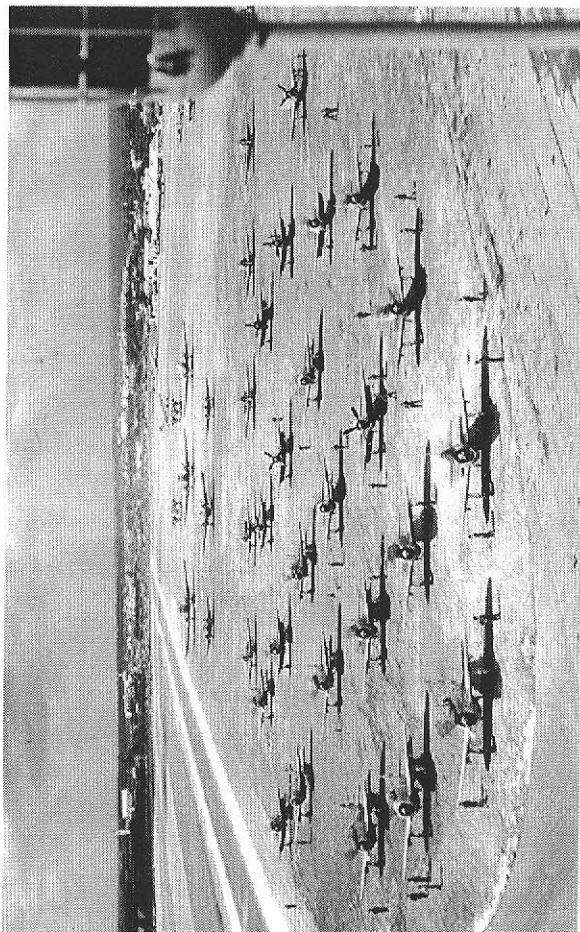




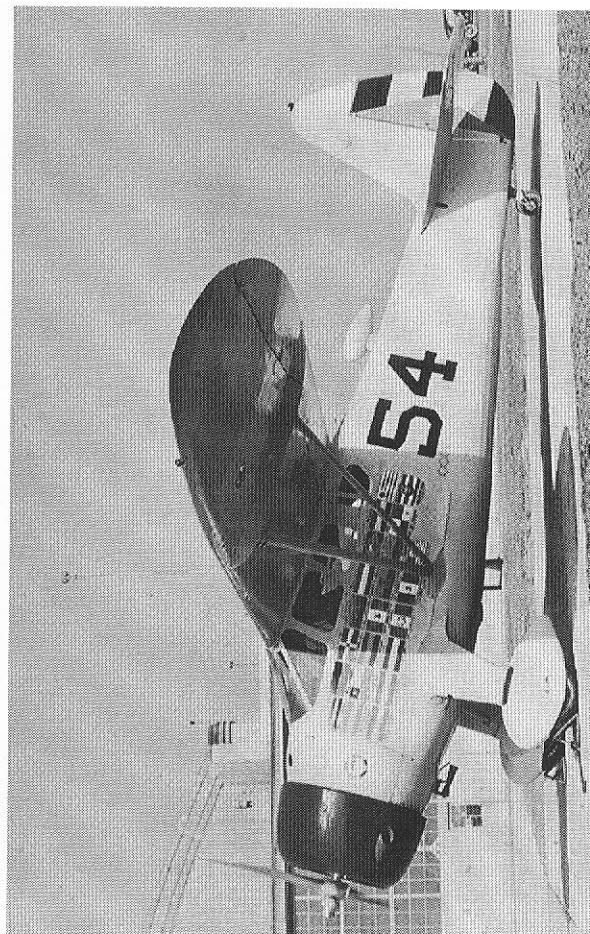
Fuerza Aerwa – Ejercito de Cuba Douglas C-54 #614. (ca 1957-1958)



Fuerza Aerwa – Ejercito de Cuba Douglas C-47 #201. (ca 1952-1958)

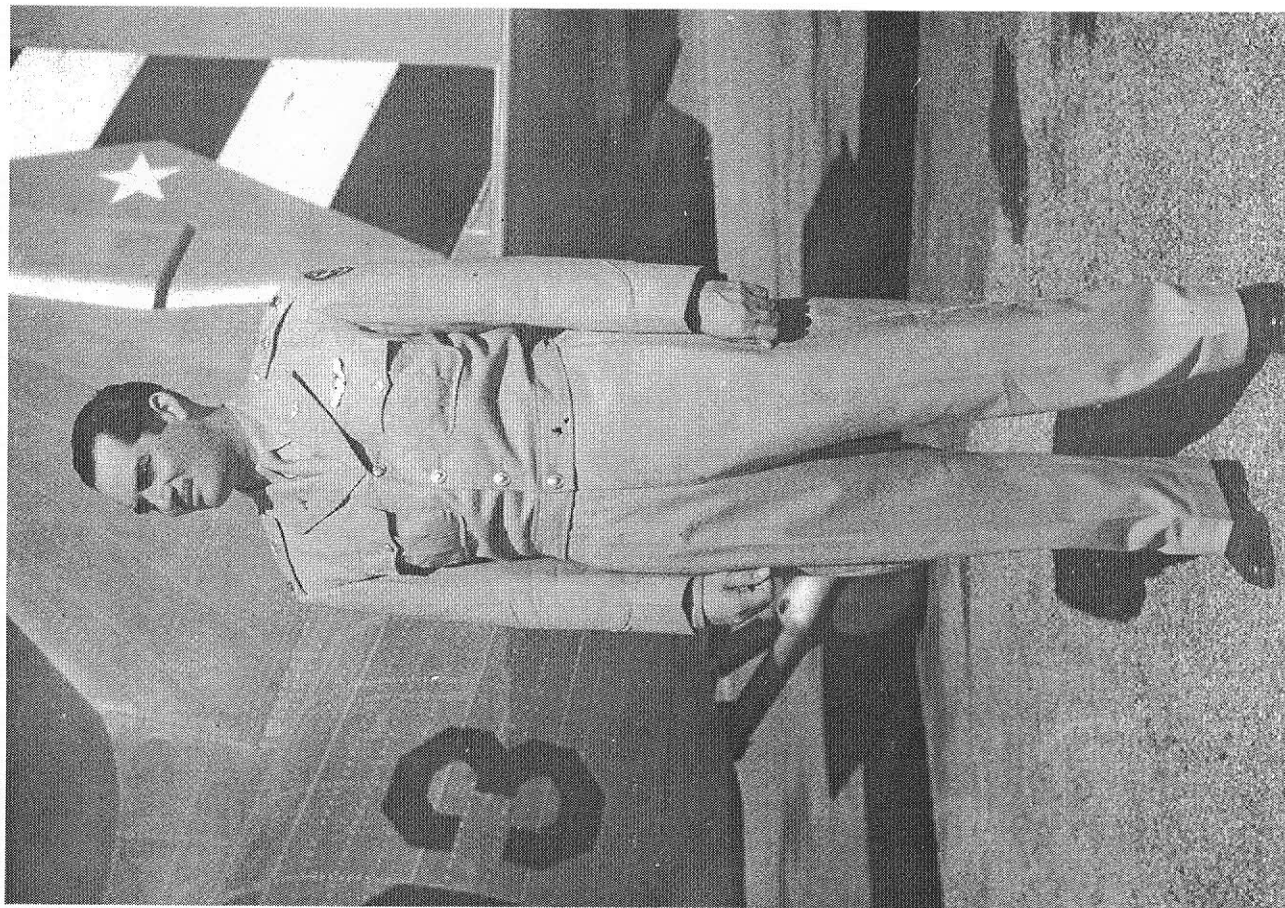


Cuban Air Force – Campamento de Columbia Airfield: Display of planes: P-47, B-25, C-47, B-34, CW-19R, UC-45F. (ca 1954)

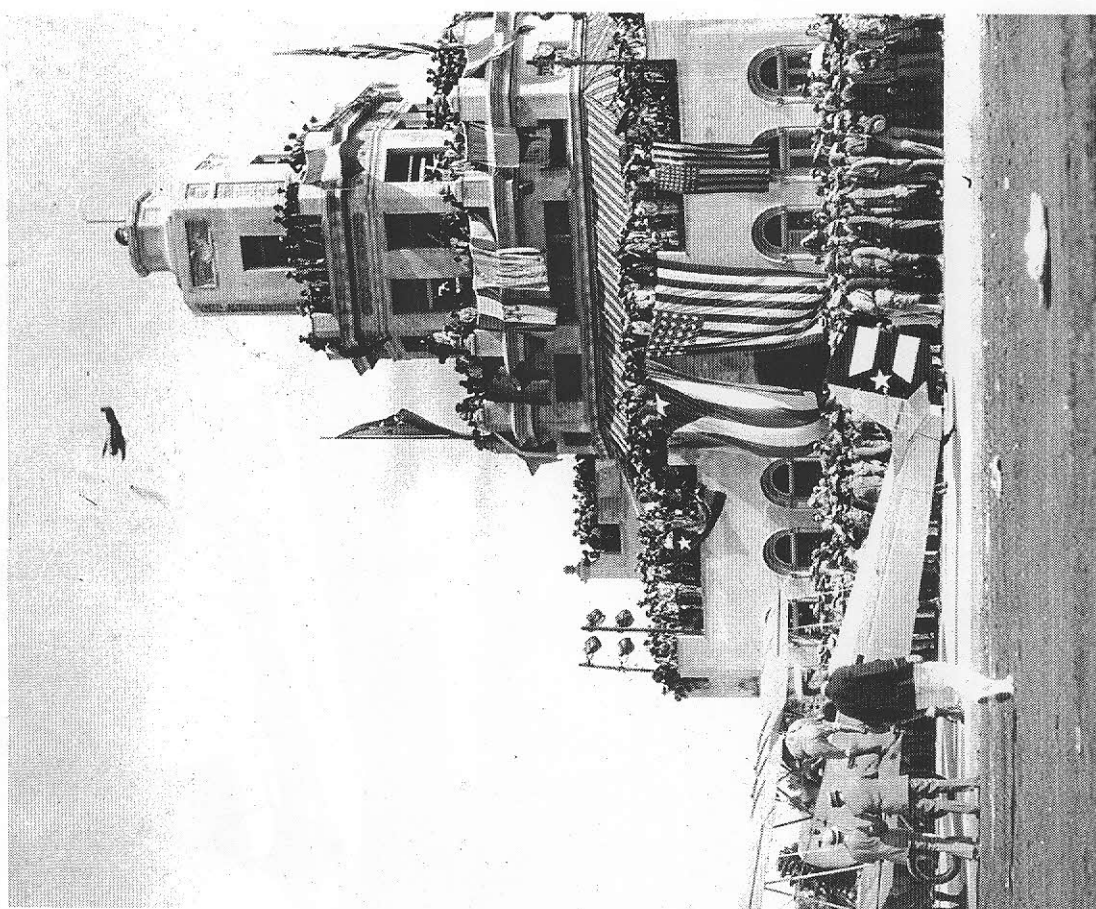


The Wright Whirlwind-powered Howard "Teniente Menendez". Cdr Oscar Rivery, Lt. Juan Rios Montengro, and Sgt Frank Medina of the Cuban Navy visited 22 countries during a 20,000-mile "Good Will" tour of the Americas. (March 11, 1941)





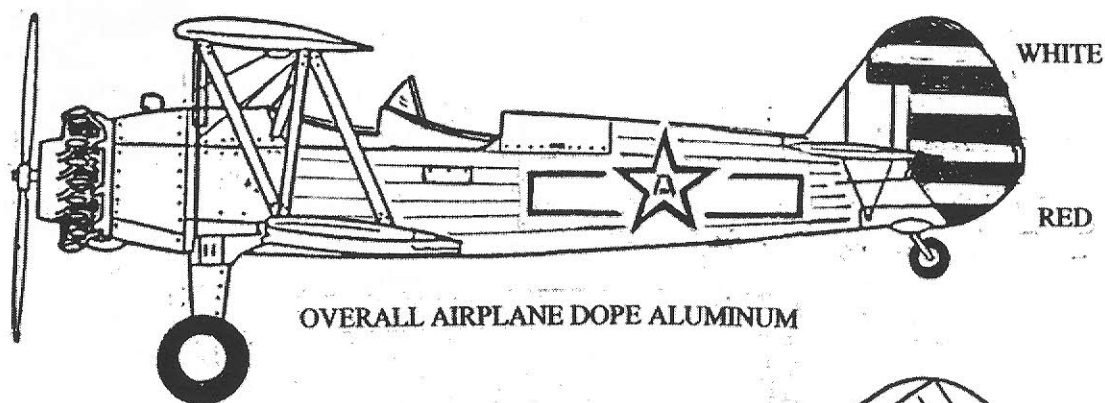
Cuban Air Force pilot: Douglas C-47 #203. (ca 1950s)



Consolidated PT-3 Husky of Cuban Air Force at the National Airport, Rancho Boyeros. (ca 1930-1937)

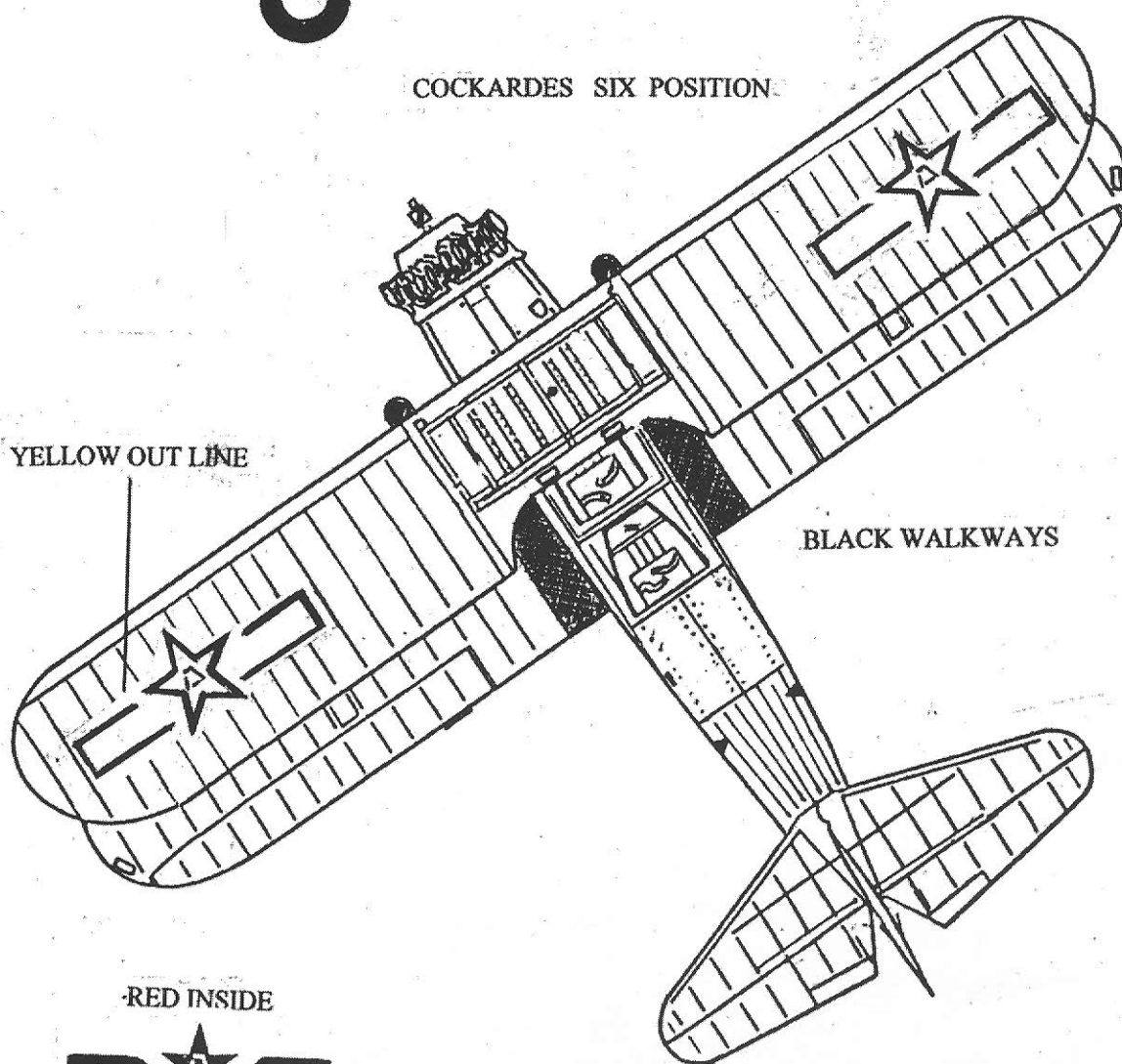
# Stearman PT-17

AIR FORCE OF THE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY



OVERALL AIRPLANE DOPE ALUMINUM

COCKARDES SIX POSITION



YELLOW OUT LINE

BLACK WALKWAYS

RED INSIDE



CAP JORGE DELGADO P.  
(SAFCH # 862)



# A Very Unusual Bomber

## The Tango-India-Zulu Cessna 172

Antonio Luis Sapienza Fracchia

During the *coup d'etat* attempt of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2000 in Paraguay, the rebels used a strange strategy to make the troops loyal to President Luis González Macchi believe that the Paraguayan Air Force joined the revolutionaries. Cavalry troops and tanks left their bases in Asunción and Cerrito to overthrow President González Macchi's government. Fortunately, they did not receive support of the rest of the Army, Air Force, and Navy which remained loyal to the constitutional government.

Cessna 172M (c/n 172-64184) of this story was originally imported from the U.S. through the Cessna representative in Paraguay, Aerocentro, and officially registered as ZP-PIZ on November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1974. Its first owner was the civilian pilot José Ignacio Zubizarreta. In 1982, it was sold to Luis Domingo Galli who transferred it to Guillermo Plate in 1987. It was then when the plane reregistered as ZP-TIZ. In the late 1980s, it was sold to Héctor Omar Risso who transferred the plane to Eastern Aviation Trainer, a flight school in Ciudad del Este, in the 1990s. One of the owners was the civilian pilot Héctor Ramón Carvallo Santacruz.

During the 2000 coup, this Cessna was flown to Cavalry Regiment Nr. 4 (RC4) located in Cerrito, on the Transchaco Road, 50 kilometers from Asunción, the capital of Paraguay. The rebels improvised a runway in a straight segment of the road, illuminating it with car lights. The plane landed there at 0030 on May 19. At first, it was thought that the pilot was Héctor Carvallo, but according to some witnesses, the plane was flown by Lt.Col. Carlos Woroniecki, a FAP pilot who had some ties with the rebels. Some other people also flew the plane.

The Cessna was then loaded with mortar ammunition and soon after that, it took off heading to Asunción. That night, some FAP Embraer Xavantes and Tucanos, plus a few Helibras Esquilo helicopters were flying aerial coverage for the loyal troops. Cessna ZP-TIZ flew over Asunción and people on board began to throw mortar ammo aiming at the Presidential House and even at the American Embassy. Fortunately, the ammo did not explode, but at the beginning everybody had the impression that the FAP was with the rebels.

The plan did not work. The ersatz bomber returned to Cerrito, landing there at 0200. The crew abandoned the plane on the road side. Early in the morning, the rebel troops, not having any support from the rest of the armed forces, returned to their bases. That day, many rebel officers were arrested, including Lt.Col. Woroniecki and also the owner of the Cessna, Héctor Carvallo. The plane was then flown by a FAP pilot to Ñu-Guazú AFB in Luque, where it stayed for some time.

Eventually, the plane was returned to its owner who sold it to Alfredo Ruíz Díaz Arévalos some years later. It is still in excellent flying conditions today.

It's worth remembering that during the revolutions of 1922 and 1947 in Paraguay, small bombs and mortar ammo were thrown "by hand" from planes.

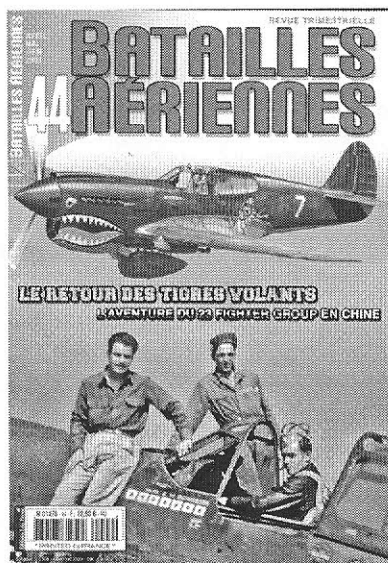
Antonio Luis Sapienza (SAFCH # 1160). PO Box 2721, Asunción (1209), Paraguay. E-mail: [asapienza@ccpa.edu.py](mailto:asapienza@ccpa.edu.py)

Photo Caption: Cessna 172M ZP-TIZ at Ñu-Guazú AFB in August, 2000. Photo: Author.



# Batailles Aeriennes

Lela Presse, 29 rue Paul Bert, 62230 Outreau, France. Email: [contact@avions-bateaux.com](mailto:contact@avions-bateaux.com). Website: [www.avions-bateaux.com](http://www.avions-bateaux.com).



**Le Retour des Tigres Volants:** L'Aventure du 23 Fighter Group en Chine. Batailles Aeriennes #44. 80 A-4 size pages. (2008) 12.5 €

This study of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group in China follows the usual excellent Batailles Aeriennes format: 80 A-4-size pages of French text, 177 excellently-reproduced photos of men and machines, both American and Japanese (most unfamiliar to this reviewer), 23 beautiful color profile drawings, an informative map, and many easily-read tables.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group took over where the AVG (American Volunteer Group) left off. The 23<sup>rd</sup> flew P-40C, P-40E, P-40K, P-40N, P-51A, and P-51C – all of which are illustrated in photos and color profile drawings.

A map of China shows the location of AVG and 23<sup>rd</sup> FG airfields as well as the extent of Japanese conquests in China. Unfortunately, it does not show the Japanese airfields mentioned in the text. Also, a bit annoying is the use of current place names (Myanmar, Bangladesh, Corée du sud, etc.) instead of the names of the time. (I assume the airfields are called as they were then.)

Color profile drawings are: Ki-43 (6), Ki-44 (1), Ki-84 (2), P-40E (1), P-40K (2), P-40N (4), P-51B (2), P-51C (4), and P-51D (1).

The appendices are very useful: (1) L'héritage de l'AVG – 2 pages including 4 photos. (2) Le Curtiss P-40 des Tigres Volants – one page including table with CATF (China Air Task Force) squadrons

with their assigned a/c numbers.. (3) David 'Tex' Hill - 5½ pages including 19 photos and a table of victories listing a/c flown and a/c type shot down. (4) Organisation de la 14<sup>th</sup> Air Force - ½ page organizational chart. (5) Les 'Diddled Dozen' – one page. (6) Blood Chits et Pointie-Talkie – one page including 6 color drawings. (7) Donald S. 'Lope' Lopez – 3 pages including 8 photos. (8) Les As du 23<sup>rd</sup> Fighter Group - ½ page table listing pilot, unit, victory total, & notes. (9) Liste de tres ou disparus du 75<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron - ½ page table listing pilots killed or missing listing, pilot, date, and mission.

The book ends with four very interesting tables under the general title "Les unités aériennes combattant en Chine en 1942". Each lists the squadron, group, commandant, and type of a/c. These tables are: "Force Aérienne Chinoise", "American Volunteer Group", "US Army Air Force", and "Armée impériale japonaise (ce tableau ne reprend pas toutes les unités ayant affronté le 23<sup>rd</sup> FG)".

Batailles Aeriennes #44 should be of interest to anyone interested in the American participation in the air war over China during WWII.

Review copy provided by Michel Ledet of Lela Presse.

**Koursk - Le choc des titans** (1<sup>re</sup> partie i). Batailles Aeriennes #45. 80 A-4 size pages. (2008) 12.5 €

This latest volume from Batailles Aeriennes covers the aerial activities during the epic Battle of Kursk in August 1943. The book is in the usual high-quality expected from Batailles Aeriennes. These qualities have been praised repeatedly in previous reviews, so it is only necessary to give a statistical survey of the contents: 115 photos of Soviet and Luftwaffe aircraft reproduced to the highest standard, 34 beautiful color profile drawings (see list below), 7 pages of informative tables, and one map (see comments below). The text is entirely in French. [Ed: The author is Dmitriy Khazanov with translation from English into French by Jean-Marie Gall. Unfortunately, no reference is given to

the status or location of the English version.]

The color profile drawings are: Soviet: Boston III, Il-2, Il-4, La 5 (4); La 5F; Pe-2, U-2 (2), Yak 1 (2); Yak-7b, & Yak-9 (2). Luftwaffe: Bf 109 (5); Fi 156D, Fw 190A (3), Fw 190F (2); He 46C, He 111H, Hs 123, Hs 129 (2), Ju 87D, & Ju 88D.

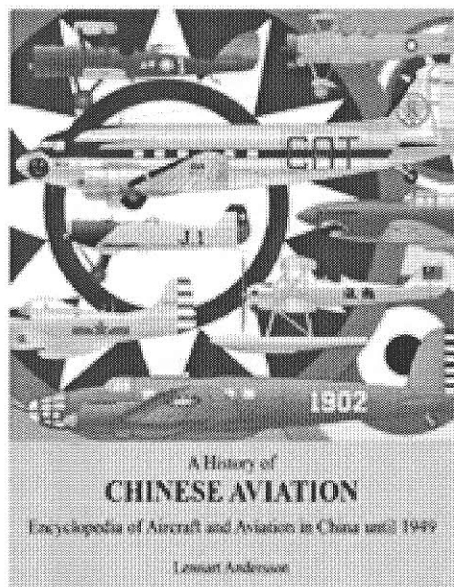
The map covers the entire Eastern Front from the Arctic Ocean to the Caucasus Mountains and shows the front line on 1 June, 18 August and 23 August. Unfortunately, as much as I appreciate the inclusion of maps, this one falls short because it covers much more territory than is necessary. It has apparently been copied from a map of current Russia with Leningrad labeled St. Petersburg and Stalingrad as Volgograd.

Batailles Aeriennes #45 will be of interest to all students of the Eastern Front during World War Two. However, to get the most out of this book, some knowledge of the French language is required.

[Since Batailles Aeriennes #46 has been announced to cover Dieppe 19 August 1942, it may be a while before the second volume on Kursk appears.]

Review copy provided by Michel Ledet of Lela Presse.





**A History of Chinese Aviation: Encyclopedia of Aircraft and Aviation in China until 1949**, by Lennart Andersson. 320 pages, Letter size, hardbound. 329 b/w photos, 33 colour profiles, many maps and tables. AHS of ROC, Taipei, ROC, 2008.

The term "labour of love" really doesn't begin to do this book justice. It is a monumental work which will be the standard work on early Chinese aviation. Lennart has been working on this project for many years and it finally came to fruition with the assistance of Dr Liang-yen Wen, an historian from Taiwan. Although WWII and the immediate post-war period are given some coverage, the focus of the book is on the 1911-1937 period, which is covered in great detail.

The structure is quite straightforward. As a warm-up, we get 10 pages on early aviation in China and by the early Republican Government. This is followed by 75 pages of narrative detailing the 20 or so provincial air forces which existed up to the mid 1930s. The coverage varies from half a page to a dozen pages. Most of these air forces are illustrated by one or more photos and there is usually a table giving details of the quantity and delivery years of the aircraft types in service. The aircraft variety is astounding and they came from virtually every aircraft-producing

country in the world. Most types were acquired in single-digit numbers only.

The next 88 pages deal with the air forces of the central governments, and the governments collaborating with the Japanese. The coverage is similar to the previous section and is again liberally illustrated. The story is complex, to put it mildly, and much of it has never seen print before. There are many tables providing orders of battle and a summary of known aircraft serials.

Civil aviation in China is covered in 44 pages, with details of both minor and major air lines. The remainder of the book is divided into shorter chapters dealing with aircraft production and design, a review of the various aircraft types used in China, and a chapter on aircraft markings and insignia.

The quality of the photos is, not surprisingly, varied, but most are remarkably good. A few look familiar, but I am sure the vast majority will be new to any reader. The photos are supplemented by several pages of high-quality colour profiles, by Gary Lai.

All in all, this may well be the small-air-force book of the year and deserves a place in any SAFCH member library. The special member price (10% discount) is USD 45 plus postage. Postage is USD 15 to HK and Macau, USD 20 to Asia and Oceania and USD 28 to rest of the world. Please order/pay through PayPal ([www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com)) to receiver [fujingping@gmail.com](mailto:fujingping@gmail.com). Or send cash (no cheques!) at own risk to J P Fu, PO Box 112-129, Taipei, Taiwan. Leif Hellström (SAFCH #786)

**A History of Chinese Aviation – Encyclopedia of Aircraft and Aviation in China until 1949** by Lennart Andersson. 320 pages (220 mm by 285 mm); Color hard covers with 33 color profiles, 345 b/w photos, 133 b/w maps, aircraft listings, tabulations, and line drawings. Published by AHS of ROC, P. O. Box 112-129, Taipei, Taiwan, ROC, 2008, e-mail:

[fujingping@gmail.com](mailto:fujingping@gmail.com). English text. ISBN 978-957-28533-3-7.

Swedish aviation historian Lennart Andersson needs no introduction to aviation enthusiasts worldwide. A highly respected prolific writer, Mr. Andersson has penned numerous magazine articles and books on aviation. An example of Mr. Andersson's contribution to aviation historical research is one of the Putnam Series titled *Soviet Aircraft and Aviation 1917-41*. Through published works, Mr. Andersson has established a trademark of being a thorough and competent researcher. His latest creation, *A History of Chinese Aviation – Encyclopedia of Aircraft and Aviation in China until 1949*, is no exception. Teamed with the Aviation Historical Society of the Republic of China (AHS of ROC), Mr. Andersson presents to aviation fans the definitive account of Chinese aviation history from the burgeoning years to 1949. This remarkable achievement sets the highest standard and benchmark for future authors to match. Prior to Mr. Andersson's book, my source of information was restricted to Chinese and Japanese publications. *Flight in the China Airspace* by Malcolm Rosholt also reigned supreme among other titles in English on the subject. Mr. Andersson's latest book realigns my Chinese aviation reference matrix. Guru William Green's 1958 edition of *The Air Forces of the World* wherein on pages 68 through 75 provided an account, albeit a brief synopsis, on the Chinese Air Force, whetted my appetite for more on Chinese aviation history. However, not many additional publications were available for the years afterward. I had to wait for umpteen years for Mr. Andersson's book to appear for a more complete understanding of the subject!



Mr. Andersson, in lucid, fluid and readable style, *inter alias*, systematically arranged his book into 12 Sections as follows:

- Early Aviation in China
- Provincial Air Forces
- Chinese Air Force
- Civil Aviation in China
- Aircraft Production in China
- Aircraft Types Designed in China
- Foreign Aircraft Types used in China until 1941
- Aircraft Types acquired by the Chinese Air Force 1942-1945
- Gliders and Sailplanes in China
- Chinese Aircraft Markings and National Insignia
- Sources and Literature
- Color Profiles

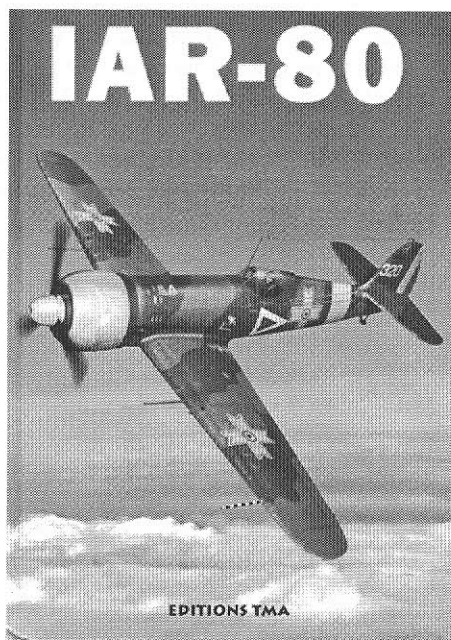
While I am captivated by the entire contents, the section titled Provincial Air Forces particularly fascinates me. To my knowledge, other than publications in Chinese, Mr. Andersson's book is the first to present information in detail on Regional Warlord Air Forces.

As stated in the blurb which appears on the back cover, the main scope of Mr. Andersson's book focuses on aircraft in service with the Chinese Air Force. Indeed, one can find detailed description of every aircraft types, which had carved a niche in Chinese aviation history. I am also impressed by the quality of the carefully selected aircraft photos, mostly from the collection of Dr. Wen Liangyen, MD, who was responsible for the production of this book. Many of these photographs are published for the first time and they are well reproduced. To my knowledge, Dr. Wen (an eye surgeon) has the largest private collection of Chinese aircraft photos in Asia, if not the world. To top it off, Gary Lai, who is an alumnus of The School of Visual Arts in New York City, graces this book with 33 color profiles. These profiles were prepared with modelers in mind to present the

hitherto unknown marking details. The Fokker Super Universal profile with Mongolian inscription on page 316 is a perfect example of this intent.

Mr. Andersson's *A History of Chinese Aviation* is the most accurate book that I know of on the subject. Aviation enthusiasts and modelers interested in Chinese aviation history cannot afford not to have a copy on their bookshelves. The only bone I have found on Mr. Andersson's otherwise perfect egg is the period covered, which ends with the year 1949. Surely, more has to be presented for the years afterward. I just hope that I don't have to wait for another umpteen years for Mr. Andersson's sequel. For a copy of this excellent book, please contact AHS of ROC at [fujinping@gmail.com](mailto:fujinping@gmail.com). Price of a copy is 50 USD plus postage. You won't be disappointed.

D Y Louie, P.E. (SAFO #544).



**IAR-80**, by Dan Antomiu and George Cicos. Editions TMA, 75 Rue Claude Decaen, 75012 Paris, France. Hardbound. 288 A-4 pages. Text in French. (2008) ISBN 2-91205-08-6.

I've always been in love with the elegant IAR-80. It may not have been one of the better fighters of WWII, but it sure looked the part. However, until I received

this book, I was under the impression that the IAR-80 was built in small numbers and paid an insignificant part in air combat. Not being fluent in French, I wasn't able to decipher the exact number of IAR-80s built, but the tables list serial numbers for all IAR-80 variants (80A, 80B, 80C, 80D, 81A, 81B, & 81C) runs up to #435. The list of IAR-80 lost totals 274 with #450 being the last lost. (I was not able to determine why #435 was the highest in the list of serials.) Pilots lost in combat number 64 with another 35 lost in accidents. Most impressive was the list of victories; about 333 victories are listed with Soviet aircraft predominating followed by a large number of B-24, with small numbers of B-17, P-38, P-51, Bf 109, Me 323, Ju 52, and a couple of strange entries (Bristol & Glenn Martin). It is clear for these figures that the IAR-80 played a more significant role in WWII that is generally appreciated.

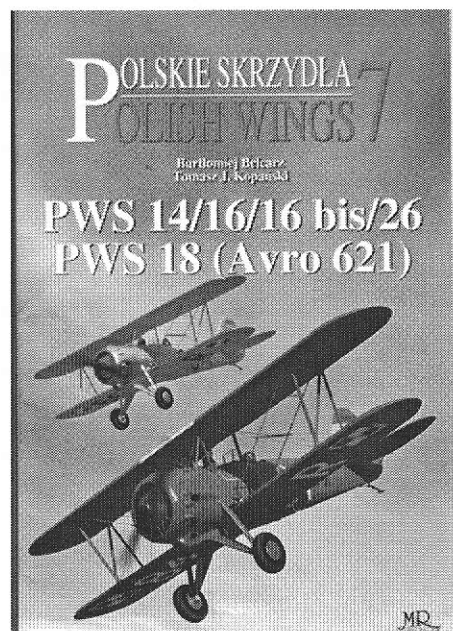
The French text consists of 16 chapter and 7 appendices. The chapters are: (1) Introduction - 6 pages; (2) Le projet IAR-80 - 3 pages; (3) Le prototype - 2 pages; (4) L'IAR-80 de série - 6 pages; (5) Developpement de l'appareil série - 2 pages; (6) L'IAR-80 de bombardement et pique - 7 pages; (7) Modifications, adaptations et problèmes apparus en service - 4 pages; (8) En service - 38 pages; (9) 1942 - 23 pages; 1943 - 23 pages; (10) 1944 - 39 pages; (11) Le jour de gloire pour l'IAR-80: 10 juin 1944 - 21 pages; (12) La Roumanie change de camp - 11 page.

Among the appendices are 28 pages of color drawings: ten 4-views and 20 profiles. These include aircraft in pre-war roundels, war-time St Michel cross, post-war roundels, and Communist-era stars. One of the profiles is for a rare two-seat trainer with the pupil in an open cockpit. There are 8 pages of multi-view 1/72-scale drawings of all variants..

Tables include: Aircraft lost; Pilots Killed in Combat; Pilots Killed in Accidents; and Victories. These tables are in Romanian but there is a Romanian-French one-page dictionary for the technical words, e.g. *lupta aeriena* - *combat aerien*.

TMA's book on the IAR-80 is recommended to all students of the air war in WWII and also to all enthusiasts who appreciate a beautiful aircraft presented in a beautifully-produced book. Don't let the French text deter you from enjoying this excellent book.

Review copy provided by Jose Fernandez of Editions TMA. .



**Polskie Skrzydła: Polish Wings #7:** PWS14/16/16bis/26; PWS 18 (Avro 621), by Bartłomiej Belcarz and Tomasz J. Kopanski. Mushroom Model Publications, 36 Ver Road, Redbourn, AL3 7PE, UK. 48 A-4 size pages. Soft cover. (2008)

Because of the Polish language title, imagine my surprise when I opened this book and found the text and captions entirely in English. My pleasure was further enhanced by the high-quality and uniqueness of the presentation. Each type is described by a short but information description of its development and service use, followed by photos and color profiles with informative captions. (See below for a statistical review of the contents). Most captions give the date, location, persons involved, and description of the incident. In a unique and welcome innovation, most profiles are accompanied by a photo of the same aircraft.

The PWS series of biplane trainers began with the PWS-14 in the early 1930s and the breed was progressively improved until the PSW-26 that saw combat during the September Campaign.

The PWS-26 gets the most coverage including a description of its activities during the 1939 September Campaign when they were used for reconnaissance occasionally dropping hand grenades on German and the Soviet troops.

This includes the fate of aircraft captured by the Germans and Soviets, and those that escaped to Romania. Three Polish airmen tried to fly a PWS-26 from Romania to Turkey but crashed near Sofia. This aircraft was repaired by the Bulgarians and this book has photos of it in the markings of prewar Bulgaria (the royal cross) and the war-time axis cross.

Summary of the contents: PWS-14: 4 pages, 10 photos, and 4 color profiles. PWS-14: 4 pages, 10 photos, and 4 color profiles. PWS-16: 4 pages, 16 photos, and 4 color profiles. PWS-16bis: 4 pages, 11 photos, and 5 color profiles. PWS-18: 6 pages, 20 photos, 8 color profiles, and a color 3-view. PWS-26: 18 pages, 101 photos, 20 color profiles, two color 2-views, and two color 3-view.

Non-Polish PWS-26 get covered with text including photos of aircraft in German (2), Soviet, Bulgarian (3), and Romanian (3) markings, and color profiles of Soviet, Bulgaria, and Romanian (2: one air force and one 1950 civilian) aircraft. The back cover has a painting for a colorful Bulgarian PWS-26 in khaki with yellow rudder and cowl with red fuselage flash.

The Polish company RPM has released three 1/72-scale kits of the PZL trainers: (1) PWA-6bis with decals for 'SP-BGX' in overall silver and '59-30' in overall khaki. (2) PWS-26 with decals for '81-20' #61 in overall silver and #31 in overall khaki. (3) PWS-26 Slepak (same kit but with optional night-flying hood) with decals for Luftwaffe, Soviet and two Romanian aircraft.

In addition, "Techmod in co-operation with MMP/Stratus realized a decal sheet for PWS-26 aircraft (Techmod Decals no. 72138A). This decals sheet features 26 aircraft based on photos and profiles published in this book."

This book is a must for all enthusiasts of the Polish Air Force and all others interested in beautiful biplanes.

Review copy provided by Roger Wallsgrove of Mushroom Model Publications.

#### **De Havilland Moth: y su Servicio en Chile**

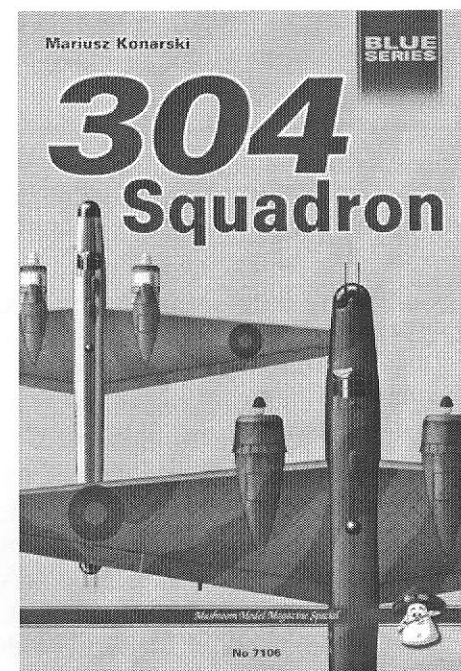
Noted Chilean aero-historian, Alvaro Romero Pérez, utilizing the good offices of the Chilean Museo Nacional Aeronáutico y del Espacio, have produced a delightful monograph

documenting the de Havilland D.H.60 Moth series in Chilean service.

The soft-bound, 84 page book includes 77 images, some of them in color, as well as one excellent three-view drawing and not fewer than 27 color side views illustrating the service life of this very significant, multi-purpose aircraft in Chilean service. Some of the photos are fascinating, and attest to the very interesting evolution of not only service aviation in Chile, but to airmail and airline development. Many of the D.H.60Gs were used by LAN, the national airline, while still in full Chilean military marks. Examples on both wheels and floats are illustrated, and there are a number of wonderful treats in the book, including a photo of the solitary Chilean Junkers W34, serial number 27, on page 26. The side-views illustrate both civil and military color schemes, as many of the aircraft were surplused to the aero club system in Chile after military use. One illustration, of No.32 while with LAN, shows a wonderful red cheatline, headed by a previously little-known LAN winged insignia – which just happens to be the scheme that the D.H.60G in the MNAE carries in several other illustrations.

If you are interested in acquiring a copy of this excellent monograph, write to the Museo at [museo@dgac.cl](mailto:museo@dgac.cl) for particulars.

Dan Hagedorn, Senior Curator, The Museum of Flight, Washington, USA.





**304 Squadron**, by Mariusz Konarski. Mushroom Model Publications, 36 Ver Road, Redbourn, AL3 7PE, UK. 96 pages including 16 pages of color profiles and 128 photos. Softcover. (2005) ISBN 83 89450 18 6.

304 Squadron was formed in 1940 from Polish airmen who had escaped to Britain. This book tells the story of their triumphs and tragedies, first with Bomber Command (19 pages) and then with Coastal Command (43 pages)

From August 1940 to November 1941 304 Squadron served with Bomber command flying Wellingtons on night bombing missions over occupied Europe. During this time the squadron lost 16 aircraft and 98 crewmen. (At that time, nominal squadron strength in Bomber Command was 16 aircraft and 324 officers and men.)

304 Squadron's served in Coastal Command from November 1941 until September 1945 flying over the Atlantic and the Bay of Biscay using progressively more sophisticated Wellingtons. They made 33 confirmed attacks of German submarines while losing 14 aircraft and 106 crewmen. Two submarines were confirmed as destroyed: Soon after D-Day, on 18 June 1944, Wellington HF331 '2A' destroyed U-441 at entrance to the English Channel. On 2 April 1945, HF329 'QD-Y' sank U-321 southeast of Ireland.

Flying over the Bay of Biscay was made extremely dangerous: Besides the weather, surfaced U-Boats fought back with antiaircraft guns, and there was always the danger of interception by Luftwaffe long-range fighters. The actions in which the Wellington survived are vividly described in firsthand accounts. [Ed: Ideas for the modeler looking for an unusual "Dogfight Double" subject abound in this book. For example, a Wellington vs. one or more Ju 88 or better yet vs. Fw 200. The book provides date, s/n, and codes for the Wellingtons. However, the modeler is on his own for the subtype and markings for the Luftwaffe planes. Perhaps there is a book on Luftwaffe operations over the Bay of Biscay that could provide the needed information.]

After VE Day, the squadron flew Warwick and Halifax transports until December 1946 when the squadron was disbanded.

This book is an exciting read with detailed descriptions of all major events.

The photos are well chosen and excellently reproduced. The beautiful color profile drawings are: Battle Trainer (2); Wellington IC Bomber Command (5) & Coastal Command (6); Wellington X (2); Wellington XIII (6); Wellington GR XIV (8); Warwick CIII (1); & Halifax CVIII (1). There are also color top view drawings of the IC and GR XIV.

Tables: "Flying personnel of 304 Squadron (Coastal Command) 8 July 1943" and "304 Squadron losses from 15 April 1941 to 18 December 1946". The latter lists 33 aircraft lost with date, s/n, code, and names of lost crewmen.

There is an excellent map showing the locations of all the bases used by 304 Squadron, and the locations of all submarine contacts, denoting ones that resulted in an attack, and which ones resulted in a submarine confirmed destroyed.

Mushroom Model Publications' book on 304 Squadron is a must for all students of either Polish aviation or antisubmarine warfare. It is also highly recommended to those who, like me, are enchanted by the attractive color schemes of Coastal Command aircraft.

[Ed: For a personal account of flying with 304 Squadron, see *No Place to Land* by J.F. Jaworzyn. William Kimber & Co, London. (1984) ISBN 0 7183 0510 8.]

Review copy provided by Roger Wallsgrove of Mushroom Model Publications,

Road, Redbourn, AL3 7PE, UK. 112 pages including 15 pages of color profiles and 136 photos. Softcover. (2007) ISBN 978-83-89450-50-0.

This book tells the story of the Slovak Air Force's 13<sup>th</sup> Squadron's service on the Russian Front from October 1942 to October 1943. During this time, they were under the direction of the Luftwaffe – thus the designation 13.(slow.)JG 53.

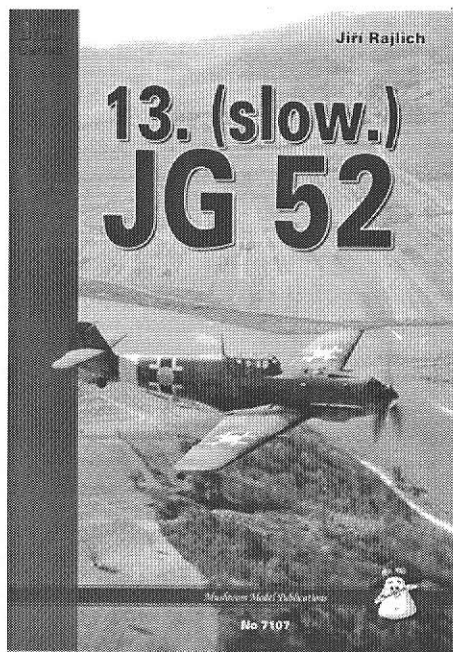
The exploits of the Slovak airmen before and after their time with the Luftwaffe are not neglected. The pilots that were to make up 13.(slow.) JG 53 saw action flying Avia B.534 biplane fighters against the Poles and Hungarians. On 3 July 1942, they crossed into Russia, but their antiquated biplanes were recalled to Slovakia on 15 August 1941 to be equipped with more modern aircraft. After conversion to Bf 109G, 13 Squadron returned to the Russian Front, where in one year they were credited with 215 Russian aircraft confirmed destroyed while losing only 4 Slovak pilots killed. In October 1943, they were recalled to defend Slovakia from American bombers. However, secret orders required them to avoid combat to conserve aircraft and men for the planned uprising against the Germans. Unfortunately, a tragic mistake resulted in combat against USAAF P-38 and P-51 that caused the loss of valuable men and aircraft. These would be missed during the ensuing Slovak National Uprising.

All these events are described in detailed text, well-reproduced photos, and beautiful color profiles.

Color profiles: 4 B.534 [Polish Campaign (1), Russian Front (2), & Insurgents (1)]; Bf 109 [German markings (9), Slovak markings (9), & Insurgent markings (1)].

Tables: "Confirmed Claims" with date, time, type of a/c claimed, & location. "Top Scoring Pilots" with name, number of victories, & fate of pilot. "Aircraft Losses" with pilot, fate, a/c W.Nr., % damage, place, and cause.

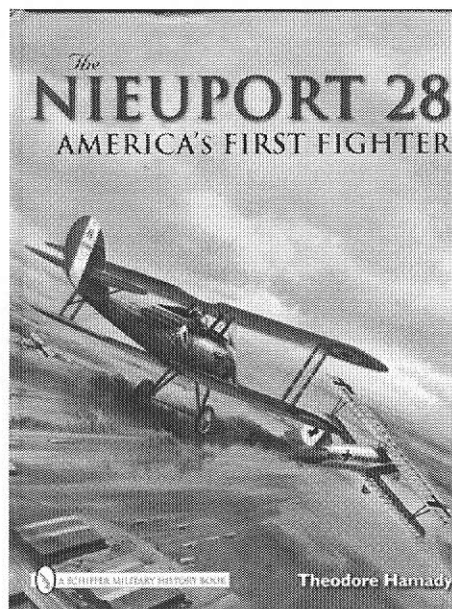
This book covers much of the same material as *Slovakian and Bulgarian Aces of World War 2*, by the same author. (Osprey Aircraft of the Aces #58.) The diligent scholar of the Slovak AF will want both, but the dilettante will be satisfied with either. Since the selection of color profiles of Slovak Bf 109 is essentially the same in these two books, the modeler searching of exotic color



**13. (slow.) JG 52**, by Jiri Rajlich, Mushroom Model Publications, 36 Ver



Review copy provided by Roger  
Wallsgrave of Mushroom Model  
Publications.



The elegant Nieuport 28 is well-known for its WWI service with the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in France. In particular, the tendency of the aircraft to shed its upper wing in a dive has been the subject of much discussion. Since I was unaware of its service with any of the small countries, I approached

Chapters: 1) First Combat: 14 April 1918. 2) The Great War in the Air: 1914-1918. 3) Fighting Machines of the Air Service, AEF. 4) Four Months of Combat. 5) An assessment of the Nieuport 28's Combat Role. 6) The Nieuport 28 in Post War Service. 7) In Civilian Hands. 8) The Survivors.

Review copy provided by the publisher.

[illegible]

Janusz seems to have a "thing" for medium-size transport planes. And, who can blame him. His vacuform kit of the Dassault Flacon 900EX, with its tri-jet layout and 19.33 m wing span (26.8 cm

The Broplan kit consists of four sheets (220 mm by 115 mm) of white styrene with all the main components sharply molded with finely-engraved panel lines, and deeply incised separations of the control surfaces. Because of the limited size of Jansz's vacuform machine, the fuselage comes in two parts requiring careful alignment of the front and back sections. The middle

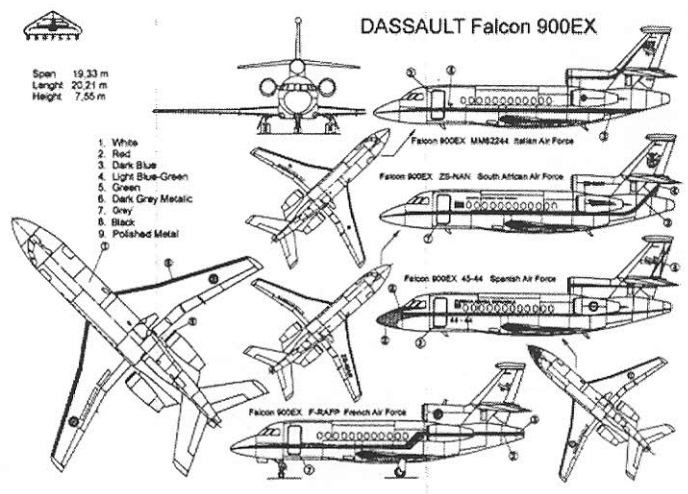
There are two small injection-molded sprues (80 mm by 70 mm) for the small parts such as the landing gear struts, wheels, intake fans, and the front rings of the jet engine intakes (a nice

touch). The interior of the cockpit is quite comprehensive with floorboard, front and side consoles, instrument panels, seats, and control columns. However, I don't think much of this will be visible through the small cockpit windows. There are no details for the passenger compartment, and none are needed. Clear vacuformed windows are provided for the cockpit and the passenger compartment.

The instruction sheet was the usual exploded construction diagram, a cross-sectional drawing of the cockpit, and drawings identifying the parts by number. The reverse side shows side, top, and bottom views of four aircraft: (1) Italian Air Force 'MM62244', (2) South African Air Force 'ZS-NAN', (3) Spanish Air Force '54-44', and (4) French Air Force 'F-RAFP'. All these Falcons are overall white with only the markings differing.

The large (220 mm by 115 mm) decals provides all the marking necessary to finish any one of the aircraft illustrated on the instruction sheet, and is a sight to warm the heart of any fan of the small air forces. Besides the national insignia, serials, air force titles, and unit emblems (that of the SAAF is particularly flamboyant), decals are provided for all the various "cheat" lines. However, as with all the more recent Broplan decals, "The decal sheet must be sprayed with no less than two coats of clear acrylic before transfer to model."

I found this kit very tempting, both for the challenge it presents in construction and for the very colorful scheme for the South African Air Force Falcon. However, discretion is the better part of valor, and I am afraid that it's beyond my modeling abilities. This kit can be obtained either from the SAFCH Sales Service (\$40) or directly from Poland.



passengers) with a rotor diameter of only 9 m (12.5 cm in 1/72 scale).

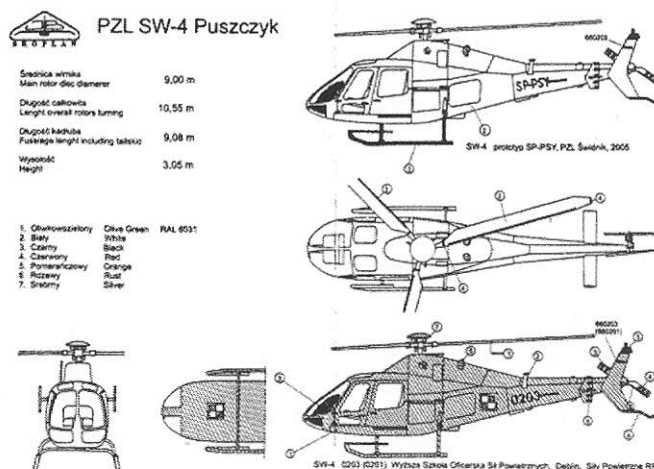
Molded on two sprues of off-white styrene, the 30+ parts are typical of Broplan's short-run injection-molded kits. The larger parts are sharply molded with a minimum of flash, while some of the small parts are a little mushy with an occasional sink mark. The interior detail is extensive with floor board, instrument console, control sticks, foot pedals, and seats with molded-on seat belts. All this is necessary because it will be visible through the large expanse of glass. Unfortunately, there is no information on the colors of the interior, so until a color photo appears in one of the Polish magazines, the modeler is left to his own devices.

The instruction sheet consists of Broplan's usual exploded construction diagram with a cross-sectional drawing of the cockpit interior, and drawings identifying the parts by number. The reverse side has drawings of the color schemes for two machines: (1) The all white prototype 'SP-PSY' and (2) an overall Olive Green '0203' serving with the Polish Air Force at Deblin.

The small decal sheet (40 mm by 33 mm) contains all the marking need for both version illustrated on the instruction sheet. However, the modeler is warned "The decal sheet must be sprayed with no less than two coats of clear acrylic before transfer to the model." And, "The national insignia place over white base."

Vacuformed clear parts providing the cockpit canopy and side windows are well molded, but will benefit from a coat of Klear. The deeply-molded main transparency is an amazing example of great vacuforming. This kit comes in a sturdy box with a color drawing of '0203' on the top.

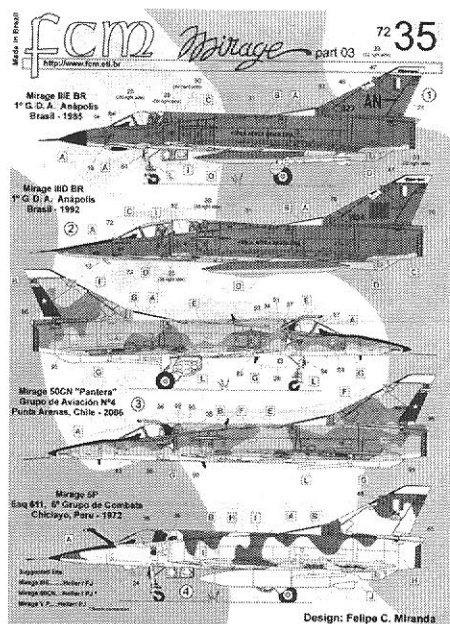
The Broplan kit of the SW-4 Puszczuk is an excellent kit of a most attractive helicopter and is highly recommended to anyone with experience in building short-run injection-molded kits. However, I am a little worried that the construction of the skid undercarriage will task the patience of even the most skilled modeler. This kit can be obtained either from the SAFCH Sales Service (\$20) or directly from Poland.



**PZL SW-4 Puszczuk**, 1/72 injection-molded kit with decals. Broplan MS-120. Janusz Brozek, ul. Pilotów 10G/33, 80-460 Gdanak, Poland. Website: broplan@wp.pl.

A somewhat surprising choice for an injection-molded kit, the PZL SW-4 is a recently-designed Polish helicopters. It is a very attractive small five-place machine (2 pilots and 3





**Mirage: Part 03.** 1/72-scale decals, FCM 72-35. <http://www.fcm.eti.br>.

This latest decal sheet from our friends in Brazil should be of interest to all modelers desiring to build models of South America jet aircraft. Featured on this 185 mm by 75 mm sheet are all the national insignia, unit insignia, serial numbers, and stenciling to model Mirages for Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Argentina.

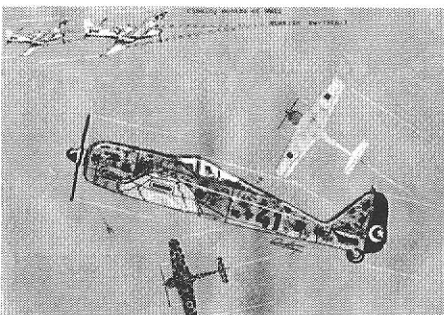
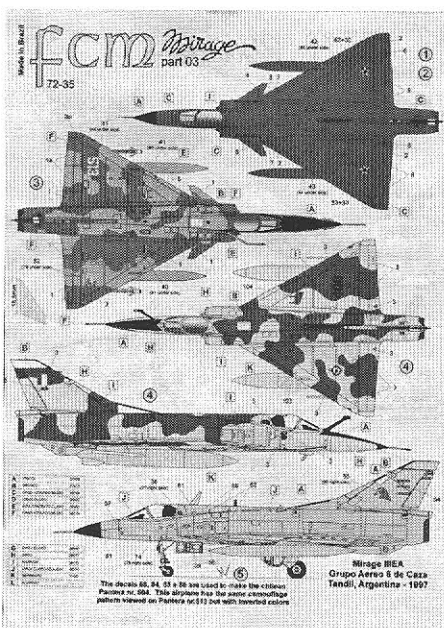
The aircraft covered are: (1) Mirage IIE BR, 1° GDA Anápolis, Brazil 1985. The aircraft in Medium Blue (FS595 35109) over Light Gray (FS595 66622). (2) Mirage IID BR, 1° GDA Anápolis, Brazil 1992. This 2-seater is in the same colors as the Brazilian IIE above. (3) Mirage 50CN "Pantera", Grupo de Aviación N°4, Punta Arenas, Chile 2006. This aircraft is camouflaged in Medium Blue (FS595 36176) and Light Blue (FS595 35450) above and Light Gray (FS595 36440) below. (4) Mirage 5P, Esq 611 Grupo de Combate, Chiclayo, Peru 1972. This aircraft is camouflaged in a desert scheme of Sand (FS595 30277) and Brown (FS595 30118) above and Light Gray (FS595 36375) below. (5) Mirage IIEA, Grupo Aéreo 6 de Caza, Tandil, Argentina 1997. This aircraft is overall Light Gray (FS595 36375) with low-visibility markings.

The decals are to the usual excellent FCM style: perfect register, brilliant colors, and sufficient to complete all aircraft featured in the set.

The full-color instruction sheet provides all the views necessary to show the complete camouflage schemes and placement of all the markings. The stenciling provided on the decal sheet appears to be very comprehensive.

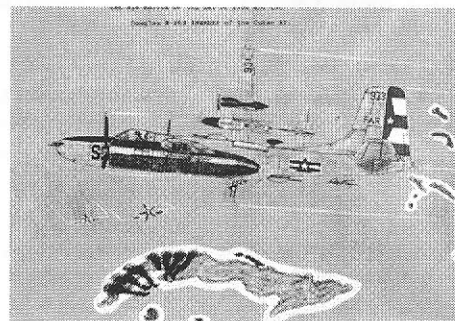
The modeler wanting to add some colorful Mirages to a collection of modern South American aircraft will find this decal set indispensable. These decals should be ordered directly from Brazil..

[Ed: On comparing the FS595 colors to the colors on the instruction sheet, I found the FS595 colors much darker than those on the instruction sheet. Since I found the colors on the instruction sheet more appealing, I wonder if I should use the lighter colors when building any of these aircraft. Does anyone have color photos that would help verify these colors? Or, are the lighter colors to be used to satisfy the "scale effect"?]



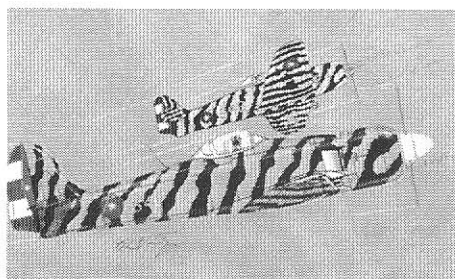
**Turkish Fw 190 A-3.** 1/48-scale decals. All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

The Turkish Air Force used a small number of Fw 190 from 1943 to 1947. However, I doubt if they ever encountered USAAF P-51 as illustrated above. This small decal sheet (55 mm by 65 mm) consists of four white-outlined red-square national insignia, red rudder with white star and crescent, and red '41'. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$2.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.



**Cuban Liberation Air Force Douglas B-26.** 1/72-scale decals. All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

During the Bay of Pigs fiasco, CIA-backed rebel Invaders were confronted by Cuban Sea Furies. This decal sheet (110 mm by 95 mm) for Liberation Air Force Invader '933' consists of four national insignia, Cuban-style rudder stripes, four large '933' for the wings, and two pair of 'FAR' '933' for the vertical stabilizer. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$4.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.



**Fuerza Aerea Revolucionaria (Cuba) Sea Fury.** All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

This decal sheet is based on the Cuban Sea Fury of the Fuerza Aerea Revolucionaria on display in Havana. The small decals sheet (35 mm by 55 mm) consists of four national insignia with the blue circle with inscribed red triangle with white star, the usual Cuban

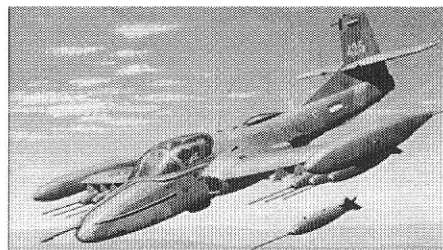


rudder stripes, reddish-orange '541' numbers for the fuselage, and 'FARS' for the vertical stabilizer. However, the drawing on the instruction sheet shows 'FAR 541' on the tail. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$2.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.



**T-28A, No. 205 Sqn., 4<sup>th</sup> Air Group, Mexican Air Force, Merida AFB, Yucatab, Mexico.** All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

This is the third All Scale Decal for a Mexican Air Force T-28A. This one is for an aircraft of 205 Sqn. with a willow-green fuselage band. The decal sheet (155 mm by 55 mm) consists of six national insignia, rudder stripes, fuselage band, squadron insignia, antiglare panel, and exhaust plates. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$4.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.



**Cessna A-37B, Salvadorian Air Force.** All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

In 1982, the air force of El Salvador received eight Cessna A-37B Dragonflies light strike aircraft. The small decal sheet (55 mm by 22 mm) consists of two national roundels for the wings, two national flag insignia for the vertical stabilizer, and four white '425' for the wings and tail. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$2.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.



**Peruvian Grumman J2F Duck.** All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

This is a real joy for the modeler of the aircraft of the small air forces – a Duck in Peruvian Air Force markings. The decal sheet (155 mm by 35 mm) consists of four national roundels, rudder stripes, four '164', and name 'AMAUTA'. I've been saving my un-built Airfix Duck for Argentine markings, but this one will be hard to resist. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$4.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.

**Thunderbird's Republic F-84F Thunderstreak.** 1/54-scale decals for the Lodola kit. All Scale Decals, 757 Emory St. #106, Imperial Beach, CA 91932-2231, USA.

All Scale Decals lives up to its name with these decals for the 1/54-scale Thunderbird F-84F. The large decal sheet (260 mm by 95 mm) consists of all the markings needed to produce any one of the colorful Thunderbirds F-84E. Order from the SAFCH Sales Service \$6.00 or directly from All Scale Decals.

## -letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-letters-

### Fiat CR.20 in Albania (?)

"I'm inclosing a photo that purports to be a group of aircraft flying over the capital of Albania. It's pretty clear that it is a shot of a single aircraft that has been photomontaged to look like six. I've enlarge the image and with the Warren struts, etc. they look like CR.20s to me.

"A second photo is enclosed showing a delegation in front of a twin-bay biplane with a water-cooled in-line engine. The caption reads "Marra në dorëzim e avionit të parë 'Fokker', Tiranë 1921" I think the translation is "Handover of the first aircraft ...", but it sure isn't a 'Fokker' and looks more like an Albatros C.XV.

"I found an Albanian-language site that says two or three Albatros E and G operated from 1932 on airline service in Albania. I subsequently found more information about Albanian Albatros. Around 1932 the Albanian government purchased two or three Albatros 'light

aircraft' to run an airmail service from Tirane to Gjirokastr. I am vague on post 1918 Albatros aircraft, but discovered on the net that there were three candidates for the Albanian E and G aircraft: The L68, a trainer from 1925, the L75 models e to f, from about 1930, and the L82 from 1932-33. The L75 seems the most likely, as it was an 'advanced' trainer for its day with the range and payload to make it a plausible mail plane.

"I have seen tantalizing hints on the web about the Albanians having two 'trainers' in service in April 1939, and the L75 would fill the bill. I am currently looking for photos or other information on the web, and it occurs to me that you might have a correspondent in Germany who would know something about these aircraft.

"The League of Nations Armaments Yearbook for various years mentions an Albanian plan to set up an aviation unit with three recon aircraft, three spare

engines and 39 officers and men. Plans to form an air force were foiled because of uprisings in 1931, 1934 and 1935, but Albania did manage to send a few officers to Italy for flight training and design badges and uniform buttons for aviators (first things first, I suppose).

"I suspect the CR.20(s?) were on a goodwill/intimidation visit to Tirana circa 1933, and are not Albanian aircraft at all.

"The Albatros website [http://www.histaviation.com/German\\_Aircraft.html](http://www.histaviation.com/German_Aircraft.html) gives five C.XV converted to transports post 1918, and does not mention if they stayed in Germany or were exported. Certainly the Albatros company existed in 1933, their last three design received the RLM codes Al 101, Al 102 and Al 103, before Albatros was subsumed into Focke-Wulf.

Susan Cross (SAFCH #65)

[Editor: Unfortunately, the photos are of poor quality and unsuitable for printing. I sent Susan's letter to Rudolf Höfling, in Austria. Rudi has written a monograph on the CR.20 and I had hoped he could help. His reply follows. (Rudie's monograph on the CR.20 is in German, but he has offered to have it reprinted in SAFO if we can find someone to translate it into English. Any takers?)

"I think Albania never had CR.20 in service. Albania was probably interested in buying this fighter, but as far as I know, they never completed the deal.

"I never had heard of Albatros E or G in the 1930's. Most aircraft, built at the German Albatros company after WWI received the letter "L" and a number. Designations 'E' and 'G' date from the WWI-era with 'E' for monoplanes (Eindecker) and 'G' for Großbomber (big bomber). But I don't remember any E or G types made by the Albatros company in the Great War.

"If anyone has information on the Fiat C.R.20 in Albania or the Albatros E and G, I would be appreciated to hearing about it."

Rudolf Höfling (SAFCH #1590), Austria.

#### Italian Aviators in Paraguay

"I just got the July 2008 issue of SAFO. I have a few comments regarding the review of my book *La Contribución Italiana en la Aviación Paraguaya* that I hope you can publish in the next issue of the magazine.

"First of all, the intention of the book was to honor all those Italian airmen and descendants who founded and developed aviation in Paraguay. That's why the book is full of pictures of them, and of course a special chapter is included with all the Italian aircraft used in Paraguay. I agree that the quality of SOME of the pictures is mediocre, but I couldn't do anything about that since the originals were also mediocre. The book, I insist, is basically a history book and not a photo album.

"Since the contents of the book were not included in the review, let me do it here. Chapter 1: 1st Lt. Silvio Pettirossi. Paraguayan Aviation Pioneer. Chapter 2: The first aerial connection between Buenos Aires and Asunción. Chapter 3: Celestino Corbellini's flights in Paraguay. Chapter 4: Lt. Victorio Barbero. Paraguayan Aviation Pioneer. Chapter 5: Italian pilots in the Revolution of 1922. Chapter 6: Francesco De Pinedo's Raid of

the Americas. Chapter 7: Selvetti and Ficarelli's flights in Paraguay. Chapter 8: Lt.Col. Ernesto Colombo and the foundation of Paraguayan Naval Aviation. Chapter 9: Italian descendants in the Chaco Air War. Chapter 10: The Paraguayan Military Air Mission to Italy in 1937-1938. Chapter 11: The Italian Influence in Commercial Aviation in Paraguay. Chapter 12: Italian flight material in Paraguay.

"Also, please correct my e-mail address, which is: [asapienza@ccpa.edu.py](mailto:asapienza@ccpa.edu.py)." Antonio Sapienza (SAFCH #1160), Paraguay.

#### Estonian Unit Designations

"Now some feedback on the April 2008 issue. This concerns the article on the Letov S-228E and the Estonian Air Defense (Ohukaitse). In particular the translation of the terminology used.

"The Estonian unit name Uksik Lennuvaedivisjon is translated to "Single Flying Division". This is, in my opinion, not quite adequate. The word "üksik" has many different translations into English depending on the context. One of them indeed being "single", a few others being lone, solitary, separate, and detached. However, in the military context, the meaning of the word is that said unit is not an integral part of a unit at immediately higher level (e.g. Regiment, Brigade). Thus, Western military terminology would name this an "Independent" unit.

"The next problem concerns the (mis)translation of the Estonian word "divisjon" into the English word "Division". Now, in English practice (and German, for that matter) a Division is a very large unit, usually commanded by a Major-General. When such units are referred to in Estonian, the proper word is "diviis". An Estonian "divisjon", however, is a battalion-level unit. In Air Force terms, the proper US English word would be Group (e.g. Fighter Group, which consists of two to three Squadrons). Given that British practice is opposite (e.g. Group Captain is higher than Wing Commander, who is higher than Squadron Leader), it would be safest to translate the whole "Üksik Lennuvaedivisjon" into "Independent Aviation Battalion".

"Doing this will also pre-empt confusion, giving the fact that such units

for six years were subordinated to a regiment (Lennuväe Rügement). In English, a division will never form part of a regiment.

"The use of basically the same word is quite similar in Poland: Dywizjon (abbreviated dyon) is the word for a battalion-level unit in the Air Force - and also in the Artillery, by the way. Similarly, dywizja (Polish) = division (English).

"Probably the use of this word stems from Russian traditions - many officers of both Estonia and Poland had served in the Russian army while their countries were covered by Czarist Russia. Their respective air arms were only established after the Czarist Empire had crumbled. In the Russian Army, "divizion" (Cyrillic дивизион) is an artillery battalion. Given that the main task of early military aircraft was artillery observation, it is very logical that the artillery unit term was taken into use for the aviation units.

"In other countries similar developments took place. Denmark is an example just by the book: prior to WWII, the Army used the word Afdeling for this level of aviation units, exactly as the Artillery does for its battalion-level units. Which level, again following the same pattern, is termed "Bataljon" for all other types of units (infantry, engineers, signals).

"Having clarified everything, I cannot resist the temptation to confuse matters by bringing the Swedish example. The Swedes also use the word in their Air Force. Here, "division" (Swedish) translates into "Squadron" (English). The unit immediately above this level is "flottilj", where the usual practice is to translate this word into "Wing" (English).

"In summary: linguistic developments are also Small Air Forces history!" Kai Willadsen (SAFCH #863), Denmark.

#### Mexican Kingfishers

"Believe it or not, I've finally been able to find the time to digest SAFO #124, as it came to the top of the stack! I want to congratulate my good friend Santiago Flores on publishing the first coherent story on the Mexico OS2U Kingfishers. These aircraft have been the source of no end of confusion among aviation historians of the region, and I think his summary present nearly all known facts bearing on the matter.

"I have always been perplexed over exactly why the FAM agreed to turn over 'newer' OS2U-3s to the Navy in what was apparently a *quid pro quo* for very second-hand OS2U-1s. The date of this transfer, as Santiago observed, was around April 13, 1943, and an Office of Naval Intelligence report (A-1-b 2394-B of that date) stated that the FAM at that time had all six OS2U-3s: one at the U.S. Naval Air Station Alameda, one at Ensenada, Baja California, and the other four at the Mexican Aircraft Factory shops in Mexico City. It also observed that '...new USN OS2U-3s have arrived in Mazatlan and Manzanillo on floats, with U.S. markings'. This is obviously a very confusing report. Five OS2U-1s, however, were assigned to Mexico by the Munitions Assignment Board for delivery in April 1943, which is noted in RG-18 at the National Archives, so these must have been the aircraft erroneously cited as additional OS2U-3s in the ONI report. But what of the FAM OS2U-3 at Alameda? Was it there for repairs or overhaul?"

"With regard to the first six aircraft, it is interesting to note that, although they were apparently retroactively covered by the Lend-Lease program, they were actually issued a U.S. Department of State Export License (No.1185) on March 17, 1942, about a week before the Mexican pilots took delivery of them in Brownsville. It would be very interesting to find the application for export for these aircraft and associated paper trail. The five OS2U-1s, to add to Santiago's report, were actually covered in Lend-Lease Case No.173 and, of interest, were provided to Mexico '...in lieu of performing overhaul work on seven, 10-year old Corsair aircraft of the FAM'. Is it thus possible that Mexico had requested Lend-Lease funding to overhaul old O2U-4A or V-99M aircraft, and U.S. officials offered the used OS2U-1s instead?"

Dan Hagedorn (SAFCH #394)  
Washington, USA.

#### Norwegian Curtiss Hawk 75

[Editor: The following e-mail exchange took place between Leif Hellstrom of Sweden and Ron Ferreyra of All Scale Decals. It's a good example of how the SAFCH works.]

"Ron, I saw the review of All Scale Decals' decals for the Norwegian Hawk 75 in the latest SAFO (#125).

Unfortunately, those aircraft were not overall aluminum but overall pale grey-green:"

Leif Hellstrom (SAFCH #786),  
Sweden..

"We thank you for your interest in our decals and also for the correction to the overall color scheme of the Norwegian Curtiss Hawk 75. We will make the proper color scheme correction on our instruction sheet.

"We will be releasing decals for Norwegian Gloster Gladiator, DH Mosquito, Northrop F5E Tiger II, and NA Sabre Dog F-86D."

Ron V. Ferreyra (SAFCH #482),  
California.

"Looking at the few photos available of the Hawk 75s that actually reached Norway, they do indeed seem to be natural metal rather than grey-green. I hadn't noticed that before. Seven of them were actually erected and flown before the German invasion, although none were operational against the Luftwaffe.

"However, photos clearly show aircraft '453' as being one of those used in Canada, with a grey-green finish. The colour may in fact just be a type of zinc chromate."

Leif Hellstrom (SAFCH #786),  
Sweden..

#### Turkish Pfalz and Norwegian Hawks

"Just to confirm that issue #125 reached me on Friday. Also there's a couple of things I'd like to pick up from this latest issue: First, photo #12 on page 19 isn't an Albatros D.III - it's one of the Turk's very few, possibly the only - Pfalz D.III.

"Second regarding the review of decals for the Norwegian Hawk 75 on page 29, if these really are for a 'Little Norway' Hawk, having the serials printed on 'the aluminium background' is wrong; these aircraft were painted in a rather odd light greyish green (not too dissimilar to RLM 02). Colour photos exist."

John MacGregor (SAFCH #766),  
Scotland.

#### Lockheed Hercules Production List

"Many thanks for your overwhelming review of the latest Hercules list. However, I can not resist some nit-picking: Dates: 1008 is August 2010. The system I am using (yyymmdd) is international and avoids the ambiguity

in US, with two systems. I have noticed that AMARC (G) is using "my" system nowadays.

"Forward": In my book it says Foreward. What do you say in American English? Preface? [Ed: My mistake. However, it can be either 'foreword' (notice the 'o') or 'preface', although my dictionary says a 'preface' is written by the author while a 'foreword' is usually written by someone other than the author.]

"Erratically (sic): I meant to say that the US orders are difficult/impossible to foresee. The budgeting system depends on political whims, like ours, I think.

"Otherwise I find your reviews most useful. They generate a few orders, but better is that they spread the knowledge of my book and work."

Lars Olausson (SAFCH #361),  
Sweden.

#### Aircraft Insignia Website

[Editor: Back in 1998, SAFCH member John Cochrane and Stuart Elliott published a book titled *Military Aircraft Insignia of the World* (ISBN 1 85310 873 1). In this book, they illustrated the history of aircraft national insignia up to that time. Since then, they have concluded that things are changing so fast that the only way they can keep their work up to date is on the internet. As an example, address their website and see what they have to say about Abkhazia and South Ossetia.]

"At last Stuart and my website is now operating. It is a work in progress but all current insignia are now on and we have started the notes on them. This will be followed by historical pics and then notes. We would be interested in any opinions. Site is [www.aircraft-insignia.com](http://www.aircraft-insignia.com). Hope you like it!"

John Cochrane (SAFCH #905), England.

#### Brazilian P-47 Book for Sale

"For Sale: "Brazilian AF in WW2 - Med Theatre of Ops." Usual slick paper 8x11 format. Dual language, b&w photos, color profiles. 1/72 and 1/48 scale decals. Good condition, no rips/marks. Mostly P47 with some B-25 and L-4 material. \$18 US includes shipping."

Dick Vartabedian (SAFO #626), 5470 Chanto Dr., Clarkston, MI, 48346, USA.  
E-mail: [dvston@yahoo.com](mailto:dvston@yahoo.com).



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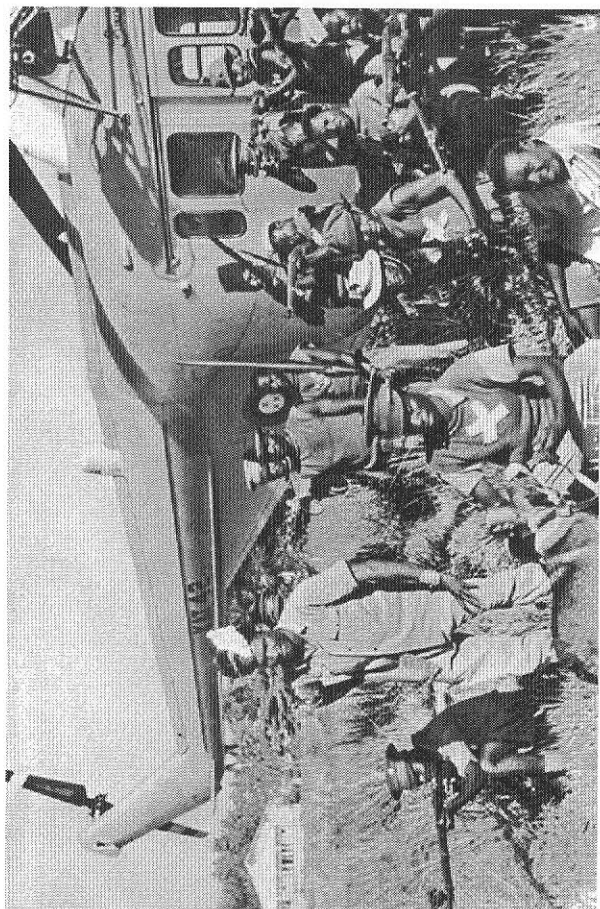


Photo 6



Photo 8



Photo 5



Photo 7



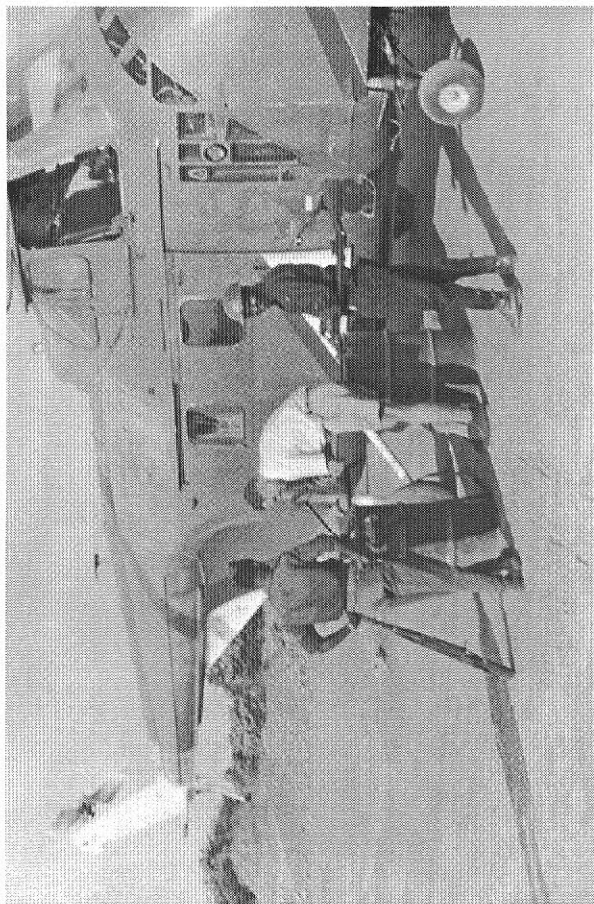


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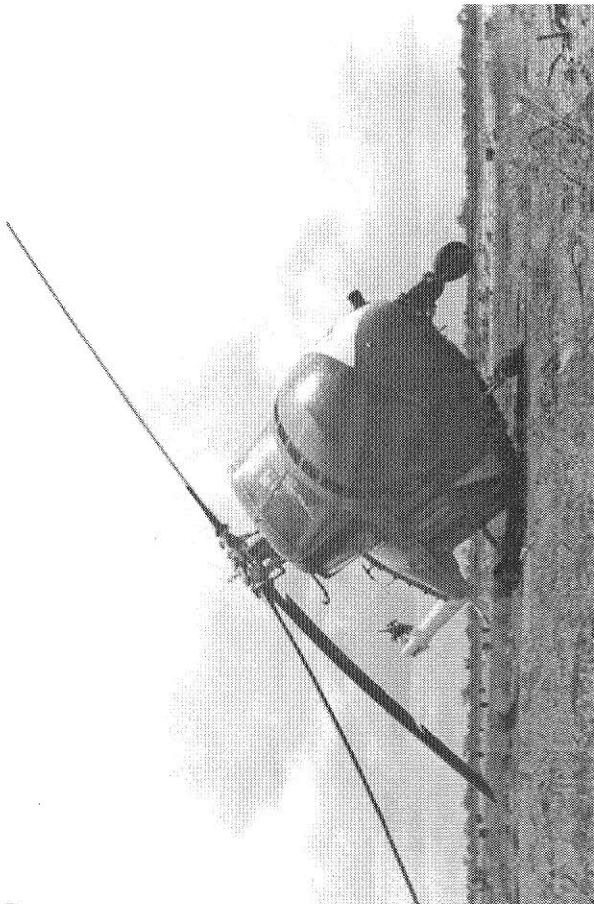


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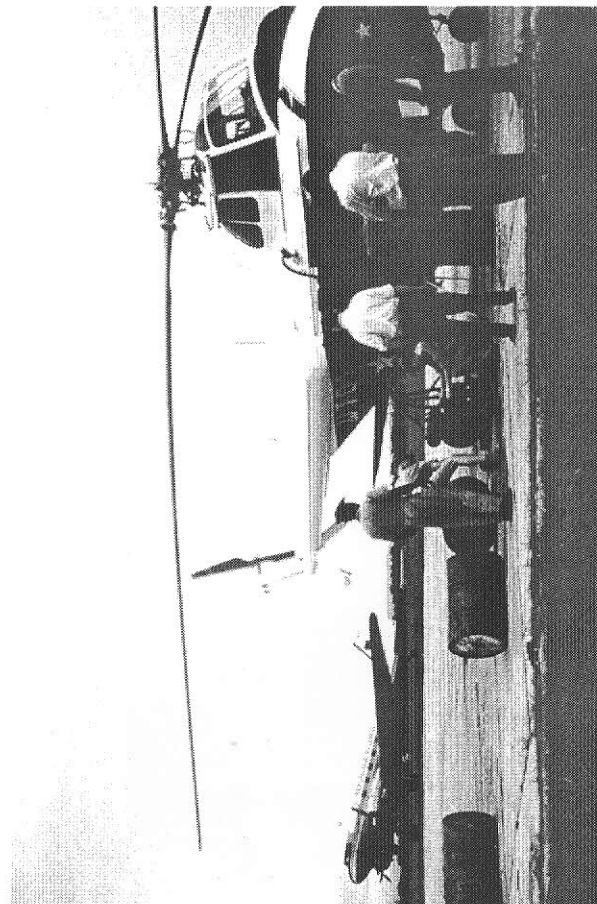


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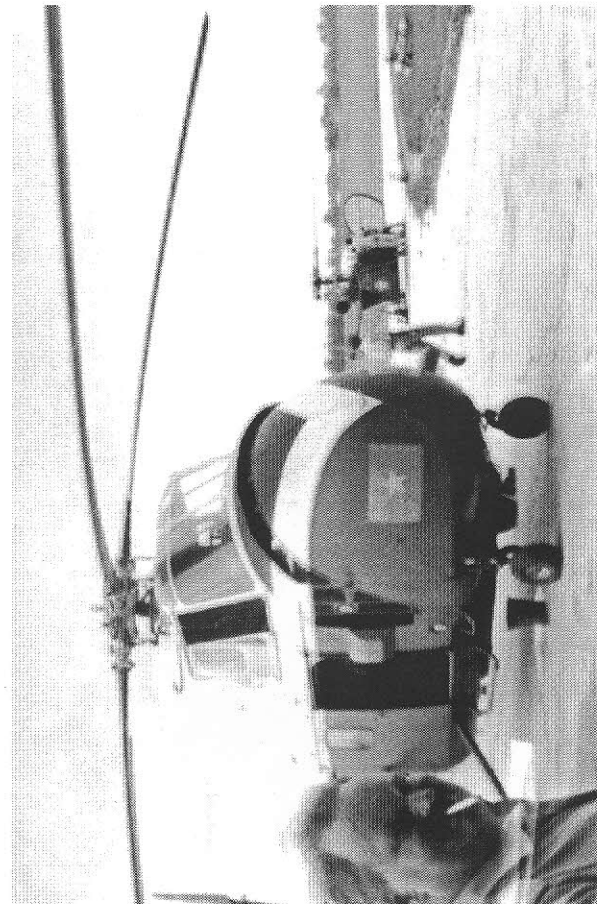


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